

A
CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PERSIAN POETS
MIGRATED TO INDIA DURING THE
MUGHAL PERIOD

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I do hereby declare that this thesis entitled "*A Critical Study of the Persian Poets Migrated to India During the Mughal Period*" or part hereof was not submitted by me for any degree to Gauhati University or any other institution or University for any degree.

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INTRODUCTION

The Mughal period is regarded as one of the most important periods of India for the development of Persian language and literature. This period is specially known for the development of Persian literature as well as other vernacular literature of India.

The Mughal period was established by Babur in 1526 A.D. and flourished during the reign of his worthy successors like Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. This period was comparatively peaceful and full of prosperity than the period of Delhi Sultanate. The rapid dynamic changes and the narrow outlooks of the rulers of Delhi Sultanate and the activities of the Khalifas and Ulemas created a wide gulf between the Muslims and the Non-Muslims. But during the Mughal period, the process of synthesis not only started due to the liberal attitude of the emperors but also reached its climax in the regime of Akbar.

The rulers of this period were great scholars, poets and penmen and they liberally patronised the learned. Persian poetry as well as Persian historical prose tremendously progressed during the Mughal period. They were fond of poetry. Jahiruddin Muhammad Babur the founder of Mughal dynasty in India himself was a quatrain and ghazal writer. His son and successor Humayun was the possessor of a *Diwan*. Other rulers of this period like Jahangir and Shahjahan were also fond of poetry except Aurangzeb who never wanted to appoint court poets and patronize the poets.

During the Mughal period, Persian poets and scholars from various parts of Iran and Central Asia began to congregate in India. The foremost reason was that the

safavi rulers of Iran did not reward and patronise their court poets. About seven hundred fifty poets migrated from their home land Persia to Hindustan. The Safawids ruled in Iran from 1501 to 1722. It was from this time that a kind of intense competitive sense had generated between the Persian poets and writers of India and Iran, each on eulogizing Persian diction, expression, writing and poetic form of his country which by the middle of eighteenth century degenerated into veiled denigrating of the Persian writings of the other country. This is amply demonstrated in the observations of poets like Nasir Ali Sirhindi of India and Hazain Lahiji of Iran.

On the contrary, the powerful Mughal emperors were always ready to welcome and patronise the poet who migrated to their courts. Another factor that played an important role in the emigration of Persian poets to India was the severe centralisation of the Persian Government and the Shiite oppression.

The Persian poets were guests at the courts of India. The continuous rivalry that existed between the empire which was being consolidated by the Mughal, and the minor sultanates of the Deccan made the various monarchs feel the need of having their praises sung and they were willing to play their panegyrists lavishly.

For the first time, in history we can thus speak of a large scale emigration of Persian writers to India, whereas the earlier contacts between Iran and India had been brought about by the Ghaznavid invasions via Afghanistan and Turkistan. Consequently, Indo-Persian literature went through a process of refinement and with the remarkable poets from Persia the literary standard advanced.

Thus, there was tremendous literary activity in lyrical poetry under the Mughals in India. In terms and profusion, and variety of themes, lyrical output was

quite incomparable. It will not be wrong to say that the phenomenal rise of Persian poetry under court's patronage in Mughal India defies explanation.

The Mughal Period constituted a significant stage in the development of Persian literary sensibility. The poetry of this epoch is marked by an outspoken spirit of innovation and experimentation, yet not without due regard for the earlier literary heritage of Iran. Mughal poetry signified a fine blending of rhetorical excellence and grandeur of thought, in which thought occupied a superior position. The poets, enthralled by its newness, experimented with new image and tropes.

The Mughal period witnessed the culmination of the development of all forms of Persian literature, particularly poetry. Emperor Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was not only a great commander and conqueror, but also a man of refined literary taste and master of a pure and unaffected style both in prose and poetry. He was a born poet and his court was thronged with the poets like Tahir Bukhari, Sheikh Zain Khawafi, Shiekh Abdul Wahid Farighi, Sheikh Shibuddin Muammai, Qara Bahadur Khan, Mulla Baqai, Surkh Widai, Atishi Qandhari, Khwajah Kalam Beg etc. Humayun was also a great poet whose court was blessed with poets like Maulana Nadiri Samarkandi, Jahi Yatman Bukhari, Haidar Tuniai, Shah Tahir, Bairam Khan, Nuri, Nur – ud – Din, Farighi, Sheikh Abdul Wahid, Sabuhi Chaghata, Tarumi, Mulla 'Ali Muhaddis, Ghubari, Qasim Ali Khan, Kahi, Qasim, Bekasi, Ghaznaw Amir Beg, Mulla Hairati etc.

Akbar's reign witnessed a brilliant age in the history of Indo-Iranian literature. Though technically illiterate, Akbar possessed a scholarly taste and his enthusiastic patronage attracted the best talents to his court not only from every nook and corner of India but also from every part of Iran. This was especially show in the field of

poetry. His court was blessed with some great personalities of Persian literature like Ghazali Mashhadi, Qasim-i-Arsalan, Qasim-i-Kahi, Ashki Qummi, Baqi Kaulabi, Hayat Jan, Bahram Saqqa, Shah Birdi Bayat, Fida'i Rustam, Mirza Safawi, Hairati Taqiud – Din, Gina'i Shams un-Din Muhammad, Mazahari Kashmiri, Maili Harawi, Muhammad Quli, Nawedi, Raha'i Sheikh Sa'd ud – Din Khwafi, Ulfati Yazdi, Urfi, Jamal-ud-Din Muhammad, Talib Isfahani, Rafi, Mir Haidar Muamma'I, Shuja'i Saiful-Muluk, Khwaja Hussain Sana'I, Muhammad Riza Shikebi Isfahani, Muhammad Hussain Naziri, Hayati Gilani etc.

Jahangir inherited the rich cultural traditions from his imperial and illustrious father and allowed them to make further progress under his warm patronage. He was an accomplished poet in his own right and has left several verses which bear witness to his poetic merit. He could recite verses extempore on suitable occasions. There were many notable poets in his court like Talib Amuli, Nur Jahan, Mir Abdullah Mizeh, Mir Maumin Adai, Giridhar Das, Dusti Samarqandi, Girami Hasan Beg Shamlu, Ahwali, Anisi Shamlu Beg, Sirajud Din Husain Arif Eigi, Hasan Beg Khaki, Mulla Haidar Khisali etc.

Shahjahan was a worthy successor of his father and under his active patronage, the Mughal culture made striding progress in all respects. Though, personally he was not a poet on occasions, he could eminently extemporize; poetry attained a new height during his reign. Soon after he assumed imperial power, he elevated Abu Talib Kalim Kashani who had only newly joined service under him to the prestigious office of the poet-laureate. The other notable poets of his court were Kalim Hamdani, Muhammad Quli Salim Tahani, Muhammad Ali Saib Tabrizi, Qudsi Mashhadi, Hasan Beg Shamlu Girami, Zafar Khan Ahsan, Nazim Mirza Farukh

Hussain, Sadud Din Raqim, Saiyed Qasim B. Mir Nurullah, Baqir Khan Najm Sani Baqir etc.

Aurangzeb had received the best education as a prince and wrote elegant Persian prose. His taste in poetry was also of high order as the verses quoted by him in his letters amply indicate. He did not appoint court poet, but there were also many poets who contributed a lot during his reign. They were Mirza Nuruddin Muhammad, Muhammad Tahir Husaini Alawi, Mirza Inayat Ullah, Hairat, Fazil Khan Munsirf Khwajah Baba etc.

The above citation amply displays that Mughal court. In this work an attempt has been made by me to highlight the Persian poets migrated to India and their contributions for the development of Persian language and literature during the Mughal Period.

This work is divided into four main chapters which excludes the introduction and conclusion. Brief sketch of each chapter has been shown below:

Chapter-I, entitled “*A Brief Socio-Political History of the Mughal Period*”, consists of six sub-chapters (a) Reign of Babur, the founder of Mughal rule in India. (b) Reign of Humayun. (c) Reign of Akbar, the Great. (d) Reign of Jahangir. (e) Reign of Shahjahan. (f) Reign of Aurangzeb. In this chapter discussion is made regarding the socio-political situation of India before the advent of Mughals and about the reign of the Mughal rulers, their achievements, policies, relations with other Indian rulers particularly with the Rajputs, their characters etc.

The Chapter-ii is “*Indo-Iranian Literature During the Mughal Period*”. This chapter deals with the development of Persian literature during Mughal period.

The Chapter-iii is “*Development of Persian Poetry in India During the Mughal Period*”. This chapter consists of one main chapter. Development of Persian poetry in India during the Mughal period has been discussed in this chapter.

The Chapter-iv, “*A Critical Study of the Persian Poets Migrated to India During the Mughal Period*” consists of one main chapter. Attempt will be made here to highlight the Persian poets migrated to India during the Mughal Period, their contribution to the development of Persian poetry, have been discussed broadly.

At the end of every chapters Backnotes have been mentioned.

In the conclusion whole discussion and findings of present work has been included.

CHAPTER- I

A BRIEF SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Before the invasion of India by Babur, the founder of Mughal Empire in India, India was divided into several kingdoms both in the north and the south. The Delhi Sultanate had broken into two pieces and the efforts of the Sayyid and Lodi Sultans had failed to revive its power and glory. The kingdom of Delhi, at that time, was ruled by Ibrahim Lodi. He was chivalrous but was neither a diplomat nor a capable commander. He had tried to subdue the Afghan nobility which had resulted in serious revolts against him. Even his own kinsmen were revolting against him. Bihar had virtually become independent and the governor of Punjab Daulat Khan Lodi, was also behaving as an independent ruler and he invited Babur to attack India. Alam Khan Lodi, uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, had claimed the throne of Delhi but failed. He found shelter with the ruler of Gujrat and invited Babur to attack India.

Thus, Ibrahim Lodi had failed to win the loyalty of his Afghan nobles or to keep them under his control. He had virtually destroyed the very foundation of the Lodi Empire. Besides, he had failed to keep good relations with other Afghan rulers of Bengal, Malwa and Gujrat. On the contrary, each of them was an aspirant to the throne of Delhi and desired the doom of Ibrahim Lodi. Worst of all, Ibrahim Lodi had wasted his power in constantly fighting against Rana Sangram Singh, the ruler of Mewar, with a view to capturing his kingdom. Therefore, the ruler of Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi, was in no position to face a powerful enemy. In the northern of India, the most powerful state was Mewar. Its ruler Rana Sangram Singh, alias Rana Sanga, had

united all Rajput rulers of Rajasthan under him either by battles or by diplomacy. He was desirous of weakening not only the neighbouring kingdoms of Malwa and Gujrat but also of capturing Agra and Delhi. He had successfully thwarted the attempt of Ibrahim Lodi to capture Mewar. He, in his own turn, invited Babur to attack India with a view to weakening the power of Ibrahim Lodi.

There were independent Afghan kingdoms in Bengal, Malwa and Gujrat. These were powerful states but were indifferent towards the fate of the Delhi Sultanate. These Afghan rulers were not expected to unite among themselves or help Ibrahim Lodi against a foreign enemy. There were independent kingdoms in Sindh, Kashmir and Orissa but none of them was powerful. In the south, there were the kingdoms of Berar, Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golkunda and Bidar which had sprung up after the breakup of the Bahmani kingdom. These states fought among themselves as well as against the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar. The most powerful state of South India was however, Vijayanagar which was ruled by its most illustrious ruler, Krishnadevaraya. But it constantly fought against the Muslim kingdom of the South. Therefore, the states of south India were fighting against each other and had neither the interest nor the capacity to look after the politics of Northern India. Thus, India lacked political unity and stability at that time. The several Indian rulers had fought against each other, yet none of them had succeeded in creating a powerful empire which could face the challenge of a foreign invader.

The absence of a strong empire in northern India and mutual rivalry of different rulers not only encouraged Babur to attack India but also facilitated his conquest of Northern India.”¹

1.1 BABUR, THE FOUNDER OF MUGHAL RULE IN INDIA

The emergence of Mughal rule in India is facilitated at Panipat in 1526 A.D. under the leadership of Muhammad Babur (1483-1530). Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf says, “In 1526, the Delhi based Kingdom of the Afghan Muslim Lodi dynasty fell to the brilliant military strategy and superior artillery of Zahir al – Din Muhammad Babar (1483-1530) at Panipat, north west of Delhi. Babar was a scion of both Timur (‘Tamerlane’, 1336-1405) on his father’s side and Mangol Chingiz Khan (1167-1227) on his mother.”²

Babur succeeded due to his skilled generalship and a scientific combination of cavalry and artillery. The battle of Panipat made Babur the incharge of the Delhi Empire. The power of the Lodi dynasty was scattered to pieces. Percival spear says “Babur took his cue with the two invasions of 1523-24 and 1525-26 leading upto the battle of Panipat on 21 April 1526. The battle was fought only fifty miles from Delhi, for so far had treachery and lukewarmness allowed Babur to penetrate already. In the fight he was heavily outnumbered by an army stiffened with a hundred elephants. On his side, however, he had the strength of loyalty in a compact group cavalry which could moreover skilfully on the wings, and the new artillery from Turkey commanded by a Turkish officer. It was these factors which proved decisive and the day ended with the death of Ibrahim on the field and the flight of his great army.”³

Babur was so generous that he distributed the vast booty among his Kinsmen and Officers. Ishwari Prasad says, “Offerings were sent to Mecca and Medina, and so great was the generosity shown by the conqueror that every living person in Kabul received a silver coin as a token of royal favour.”⁴ Immediately after the battle of Panipat, Babur planned to capture Agra. This time his son Humayun was sent

followed by himself. Humayun accorded to his father a warm welcome and was able to present to his father the famous diamond obtained from the Raja of Guwalior, which in turn was returned to him by his generous father'.⁵ When Babur marched from Delhi to Agra, his first act was to make a garden in the Persian style. His 'begs' or chiefs did not like the heat and dust and wanted to "return to the musk melons and cooling streams of the Afghan Hills. This was Babur's most critical moment, which he finally overcame by a dramatic appeal to Mughal loyalty."⁶

"The Rajput Rana Sanga put a treat approaching Agra with 100000 Rajputs. Discouragement and disgust occupied the 'begs' but Babur "assuaged by a further appeal and the sensational breaking up of his loved drinking cups."⁷

Babur now determined to wrest the country from the Afghan barons. He held a war council successfully. Biyana, Guwalior and Dholpur were captured by Babur; Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Kalpi were conquered by Humayun separately"⁸ The challenge to Babur came from Rana as the latter advanced towards Biyana. On 16th March, 1527, the Rana suffered a terrible defeat. Babur captured the fort of Chanderi, defeated the Afghans in the battle of the Ghagra.

After a serious illness Babur passed away on December 26, 1530. His body was first laid in Rambagh or Arambagh at Agra on the bank of Jamuna, but it was shifted to Kabul to keep his wishes and buried in a place chosen by himself"⁹

Babur was a conqueror but did not establish institutions and devise new laws. Ishwari Prasad says, "Babar had no time to devise new laws or establish institutions for the governance of the wide dominions which he had won by the power of his sword. He accepted the system which he had found in vogue in Hindustan and

parceled out his empire into fiefs which he entrusted to Jagirdas dependent upon himself.”¹⁰

The financial deficit caused by his lavish generosity and the unsettled state of the country were the main drawbacks of Babur’s reign. The stamp duty was levied on the Muslim on the eve of the battle of Khanwah. He was too reckless in distributing the treasure found at Delhi and Agra that he was obliged to have recourse to additional taxation in order to obtain the necessary equipment for the army.

Babur’s conquest was important from military point of view as it introduced a new technique of warfare. Erstwhile the Indians knew about some sort of fire arms but did not realize their significance. Babur’s use of cavalry and artillery realized in smashing the numerically stronger armies of Indian rulers.”¹¹

Babur also started the policy of religious tolerance. Earlier invaders behaved fanatically but Babur set up a cordial relationship between Hindus and Muslims. He appointed Hindus to high positions that included Medini Rao in Malwa and other officials in Kashmir, Bengal etc and thus paved the way for Akbar.

Majumdar et al writes, “He brought the energy of the Mangol, the courage and capacity of the Turk, to the subjection of the listless Hindu; and himself a soldier of fortune and no architect of empire, he yet laid the first stone of the splendid fabric which his grandson Akbar completed.”¹² Babur had a greater personality. The qualities of Babur besides a ruler can be assessed in the words of spear “Babur is one of the most attractive characters in Indian or any other history. He was not only a soldier statesman of a familiar type, but a poet and man of letters, of sensibility and taste and humours as well. Wherever he went he laid out Persian gardens and his memories are dotted with reference to natural beauties.”¹³

He had a zest for life which he carried with him cheerfully through the hardships of his early life when he was often a hunted man, and a sense of humour which could make even treachery look ridiculous. His love of sport was infectious and spontaneous and he treated life as one long game of polo. He lacked the vindictiveness common at that time of fanaticism and intense power struggle and had a personal magnetism which could galvanize his followers as in those hot dusty days in Agra and in the camp before 'Rana Sangas' Rajputs. Any good soldier at that time could collect followers. Babur had the rarer gifts of retaining their loyalty, of inspiring them to further efforts, and of reconciling enemies as well as defeating them.”¹⁴

1.2 REIGN OF HUMAYUN

Humayun materialized his heritage to the throne of Hindustan at the age of twenty three after three days of the death of Babur. But his ascension was not an easy one as he had to face several challenges from hostile forces, Majumdar et al writes, “There was hardly any unity in the royal family, and his cousins Muhammad Zaman and Muhammad Sultan, were pretenders to the throne. Moreover, as the law of primogeniture was not strictly enforced among the Mussalmans, his three brothers Kamran, Hindal and Askari, also coveted the throne....His court was also full of nobles who engineered plans for the possession of the throne. Further, the army at his disposal was a mixed body composed of adventures of diverse nationalities having conflicting interests. Thus, he could not safely count on the support of his relations, his court, on his army.”¹⁵

In addition to the above points, his father's legacy was a precarious one as the father did not leave behind him a well-organized and consolidated Empire. Percival Spear writes “The state which Babar took even was an aristocratic confederation and

had little bureaucratic machinery. Babar had therefore no readymade apparatus of government, but he did have a free hand to shape new institutions. His genius was for personal government and he died before he had the chance or need to organize.”¹⁶

Humayun lacked military genius, diplomatic skill and political wisdom. He was endowed with intellectual tastes and love of culture, but he was void of wisdom, discretion and his father’s strong determination and perseverance. The numerous Afghan scattered nobles, found a strong and able leader in Sher Shah to galvanise them into life.

The notable mistake on the part of Humayun was that he showed indiscreet clemency towards his brothers who should have been kept under effective control. Majumdar writes, “Askari was given the fief of Sambhal; Hindal that of Alwar; and Kamran, the eldest of the three, was not only confirmed in the possession of Kabul and Quandahar but also secured after a military demonstration against Mir Yunis Ali, Humayun’s general at Lahore, the Punjab and the district of Hissar Firuza, to the east of the Punjab proper. Thus Humayun struck at the root of the integrity of Babar’s Empire.”¹⁷

In his early wars, fortune had favoured Humayun before the hostile forces grew uncontrollable. Five or six months of his accession, he marched to besiege the fortress of Kaliagar in Bundelkhand. But he had to retire after levying a certain amount of money from the Raja. He won over the Afgans at Dourah and sent back Sultan Mahmud Lodi from Jaunpur. He besieged Chunar, but soon abandoned it. He defeated the troops of Bahadur Shah near Mandasar. But the victory was short lived. The celebration of victory became excessive. His own camp became a scene of uproar and insubordination. He, his brother Askari and most of his soldiers plunged into

feasting and revelry. The Sultan of Gujrat took advantage of it due to the lack of insight of Humayun. No sooner had he began his return march than Malwa was also lost to him.

Estimate of Humayun: As an individual Humayun was possessor of many qualities. He was well educated and cultured. Besides Geography, Mathematics, Astronomy and Muslim theology, he knew Turki and Persian as well. He was an ideal son, loveable husband, affectionate father, ideal brother and a good relative. He was emotional, courteous, polite, and witty and possessed the virtues of charity and munificence in a very high degree. He was brave, genial, generous and merciful. Humayun, was the model of a gentleman, the very flower of humanity and the knight-errant of the Mughal dynasty. The brilliant conquests of his father and the unique genius of his son have eclipsed the manifold good qualities of Humayun.

In spite of his good qualities, he possessed some weaknesses which betrayed his name. He was neither a good general like his father Babur nor a good strategist like Sher Shah. His military plans were defective and were never properly executed. He was versatile, thoughtless, and unsteady. He was unable to concentrate on his energies for long in any serious direction. He was not a good administrator. During the period of ten years when he was the king he did nothing to improve the administrative system of the country. With all his weakness and failings, Humayun has significant place in Indian History which is not, perhaps, always duly appreciated. The well-timed restoration of the Mughal power was a real achievement which paved the way for the splendid imperialism of Akbar, while the indo-Persian contact, which he reinforced and stimulated, was a factor of far reaching consequences in the history of Indian civilization.

Sher Shah and the Surs

Sher shah “effected the revival of the Afghan power and established a glorious; though short, regime in India by casting the newly established Mughal authority.”¹⁸

He had to pass through various trails and vicissitudes of fortune before he rose to prominence by dint of his personal merit. He came into the service of the independent ruler of Bihar, Bahar Khan Lohani in 1522. He discharged his duties honestly and assiduously and secured his masters favour. The title of Sher Shah was conferred on him by his master for showing gallantry in killing a tiger single-handed. But his enemies poisoned his master’s mind against him and soon lost his Jagir. Sher then became again the deputy governor and guardian of his former pupil, Jalal khan. In the course of four years he won over the greater part of the army. Sher Shah’s Administration was based on a centralised system with all the powers under the control. The minister’s job was to look after the daily routine of administration. The ministers “did not possess power to introduce radical changes in the administration without his consent. All the major decisions were taken by the king who also disposed of most of the important business of the state. Despite the concentration of all authority in the hands of the king, he ruled like a benevolent despot and paid full respect to the welfare of the people.”¹⁹

Sher Shah’s important in the administrative history of India lies in his land revenue reforms which are based on wise and human principles. They serve as model for the agrarian systems in future. He made a careful and proper survey of the lands and after it, he settled the land revenue direct with the cultivators R.C. Majumdar et al writes, “He instructed the revenue officials to show leniency at the time of assessment

and to be strict at the time of collection of revenues. The rights of the tenants were duly recognized and the liabilities of each were clearly defined in the 'Kabuliyat' (deed of agreement) which the state took from him, and the patta (title deed) which it gave in return. Remissions of rents were made, and probably loans were advanced to the tenants in case of damage to crops, caused by the encampment of soldiers or the insufficiency of rain. These revenue reforms increased the resources of the state and at the same time conduced to the interest of the people."²⁰

To improve upon the economic condition of the Empire, the currency and tariff reforms of Sher Shah were also calculated. He removed the vexatious customs and permitted the imposition of customs on articles of trade only at the frontiers and in the places of sale and thereby he reformed the tariff. This facilitated easy and cheap transport of merchandise and thereby helped the cause of trade and commerce. Ray Choudhury says "Sher Shah gave every possible encouragement to the trade and commerce and took a number of measures for his purpose. He did away with all the internal custom duties with the exception of the two. These two duties were charged at the time of entry of the goods in his kingdom and at the time of the actual sale. Foreign goods were permitted to enter Bengal duty free. Sher Shah paid special attention to the safety and convenience of the merchants and had issued special instructions to his officers in this regard."²¹

The improvement of communication is one of the significant factors in the improvement of trade and defence. R.C. Majumdar et al write, "For the purpose of imperial defence as well as for the convenience of the people, Sher Shah connected the important places of his kingdom by a chain of excellent roads."²²

Sher Shah's administrative foresight was evident in enforcing local self-government. The removal of crimes was the responsibility of the local authority. R.C. Majumdar writes, "To secure peace and order, the police system was recognized and the principle of local responsibility for local crimes was enforced. Thus, the village headmen were made responsible for the detection of criminals, and maintenance of peace, in the rural areas."²³

Justice prevailed at the time of Sher Shah's administration and he made no distinction between the highest and the lowest classes. R.C. Majumdar et al writes again, "Sher Shah had a strong sense of justice, and its administration under him was ever-handed, no distinction being made between the high and the low, and not even the near relatives of the king being spared from its decrees."²⁴

No doubt Sher Shah was a pious Muslim, but he was not a bigot. He treated the Hindus in general with tolerance and justice. He even employed Hindus in important offices of the state. Brahmajit Gaur was one of his best generals.

The history of Medieval India marks Sher Shah as a striking personality. By virtue of sheer merit and ability he rose to the position of the leader of Afghan rulers that has been produced by India.

1.3 REIGN OF AKBAR THE GREAT

Jalalud-Din Muhammad Akbar, the son of the Mughal emperor Humayun, is famous in history only as Akbar. He has been acclaimed as the great among the rulers of Medieval India. Akbar is one of the most remarkable kings, not only in the history of India but of the whole world. Akbar was a strong imperialist by instinct and followed a policy of conquest to expand his Empire till the capturing of Asirgarh in January, 1601. He succeeded in the political unification of nearly the whole of

Northern and Central India by frequent annexations that extended over forty years of his life.

Besides being a great Emperor Akbar was an accomplished administrator. Sher Shah Suri left a system for Akbar and he later improved upon it, Ray Choudhury says, "He provided an excellent system of administration. Though his system of administration was largely based on the principles and institutions introduced by Sher Shah Suri, but Akbar effected many improvements in the system to make it more effective. It may be noted that Babur and Humayun were so much preoccupied with their political struggle that they were unable to pay any attention to the administration of the country. This was done by Akbar. He set up a system of administration which was carried out by his successor without much change."²⁵

Akbar maintained the administration of centralized system during his time. The king was the head of the state and along with it he was the chief in Judiciary system and the commander in chief of the armed forces. He was assisted by a number of ministers and their advice was not bound on him. His administration included *Wazir* (Diwan), *Mir Bakshi Khan-i-Sarman* (Mir Saman). The *sadar us-sadur* or Chief Sadar, *Qazi ul Quzat* or chief Judge, *Muhtasib*, News writers, *Daroga-i-Dak Chauki* etc.

He divided his whole kingdom into fifteen provinces. It was a miniature of the central administration. Each province was divided into a number of Sarkars or districts that were further divided into a number of parganas. The longest unit of administration under Akbar was the village.

Akbar's treatment of all the classes under him was noble and tolerant. R.C. Majumdar et al says, "Akbar's conception of universal tolerance was indeed a noble

one and is a brilliant testimony to his national idealism..... An intrepid soldier, a benevolent and wise ruler, a man of enlightened ideas, and a sound judge of character, Akbar occupies a unique position in the history of India.”²⁶

It is a fact that Akbar did not learn how to read and write, but he was a cultured one possessing fine literary taste. Regarding his curiosity for different branches of learning, R.C. Majumdar et al says, “Possessed of a fine literary taste, a profound intellectual curiosity and a marvelous memory, he took interest in the different branches of learning, such as philosophy, theology, history and politics. He maintained a library full of books on various subjects and was fond of the society of scholarly poets and philosophers, who read books to him loud, and thus enabled him to be conversant with Sufi, Christian, Zoroastrian, Hindu and Jain literature.”²⁷

Akbar was ambitious of territorial conquests and through it the limits of the Mughal Empire were extended almost to the farthest limits of Northern India. But Akbar cannot be called a selfish and unbridled autocrat. He paid heed to the feelings of the conquered and did not trample on the rights and privilege of them only to satisfy his self interest. He meted out fair treatment to the Hindus and appointed them to high points just like Sher Shah and his successors. Not only had this he also tried to remove all individual distinctions between the Muslims and Non Muslims. The pilgrim tax was abolished in the eighth year and the ‘Jizya’ in the ninth year of his reign, and inaugurated a policy of universal tolerance and freedom for all. Thus, he chalked out a national path for anyone aspiring to the position of a national ruler of India. Akbar’s revenue system was excellent. He received help from Musaffar Khan, Itimad Khan and Todar Mal. He first asked to assess the land and then classified it

into four categories, and the first two categories were further subdivided. The state did the favour by offering loans at the time of crisis and paid in easy annual instalments.

Another important system of administration maintained by Akbar was the Mansabdari system. It aims at fixing a particular person at a particular position depending on his house, soldiers, his status and salary etc.

Akbar was a ruler who stood for justice. The Emperor himself stood at the apex of the judicial administration and was considered as the fountain of justice. He held his court on a fixed day and decided the cases.

Akbar's social reforms were based on humanitarian aspects irrespective of caste, creed and religion. He was also a patron of art and literature.

Akbar's greatness as a statesman is evinced in the fact that of all the Mughal rulers he first realized what India, a multilingual, multireligious country, needed. He felt that in order to rule India with the best of intentions, the active co-operation of the Hindus was necessary. So he ushered in a new era by making the Rajputs his friends. His philosophy of Sul-hi-kul was not new as a message in the land of Buddha and Ashoka and Chaitanya. The political manifestation of these principles in the hands of Akbar made it appear unique in his time. Akbar's claim to greatness and immortality as a ruler lies in his sincere attempt to establish a welfare state on the principle of religious and social equality among his subjects.

Akbar took many things from the Hindus but he hated Hindu social customs like Sati-daha, Child marriage, multiple marriages etc. He dared to promulgate laws banning these social evils. Taking into account of his empire and his magnificent achievements as a warrior and statesman, it can be said that Akbar was the greatest ruler of the then world. The rare combination of idealism and realism entitled Akbar to

the first place among the Muslim rulers of India and one of the first among the most important and successful monarchs, both Hindu and Muslim, this country had ever had. Akbar's age was an age of great rulers. His contemporaries were Elizabeth I of England, Henry IV of France and Abbas, the great of Persia. He was unquestionably superior to them in more respects than one. He was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to rank as one of the greatest sovereigns known to history.

1.4 REIGN OF JAHANGIR

Jahangir ascended to the throne in 1605 after the death of his father and ruled till 1627. "His period witnessed fruition of the empire which Akbar had so gloriously built. The Mughal Empire during his period was established on a secure foundation and developed the capacity to withstand the various rebellions and wars of successions." ²⁸

In the early part of his reign, Jahangir witnessed same important military success. He was humane towards his subjects and considerate, a sensible and kind hearted man as he was with strong family affections and unstinted generosity to all, he had a burning hatred of oppression, a strong passion for justice. R.C. Majumdar et al says, "He imposed penalties without any consideration for the rank of the accused" ²⁹ and "Jahangir was determined to make himself easily accessible to his subject without mediation of his officers or servants. He therefore provided a golden chair weighing four pounds and having 60 bells between the Shahburj of Agra fort and the stone pillar specially raised for the purpose on the bank of river Jamuna. This shows Jahangir's high sense of justice." ³⁰

During his reign, a new intercourse between Europe and India was established, He was a patron of art and literature and a lover of nature and possessed a fine aesthetic

taste as he himself was a painter. In religious matters, he gave an equal ear to the suits of all religious, R.C. Majumdar, says, “Jahangir’s attitude towards religion was not so rational as that of his father, but he was not an eclectic or a Christian at heart. With a sincere belief in God, he did not remain satisfied with mere dogmas of any particular creed but was a deist. He loved to converse with Hindu or Muslim saints and Christian preachers.”³¹

There are diverse views regarding the estimate of Jahangir. “While some consider him as a fickle minded tyrant, fond of wine and woman and unsuccessful both as a man and a ruler, the others talk upon him as a just and a noble monarch who tried to impart justice to everyone with impartiality.”³²

Jahangir decided to start his reign with a grand display of Justice as he saw it. To this end he enacted Twelve Decrees that are remarkable for their liberalism and foresight. During his reign, there was significant increase in the size of the Mughal Empire, half a dozen rebellions were crushed, prisoners of war were released and the works of his father Akbar continued to flourish. Much like his father, Jahangir dedicated to the expansion held territory through conquest. During his regime, he would target the people of Assam near the eastern frontier and bring a series of territories controlled by independent Rajas in the Himalayan foothills from Kashmir to Bengal.

Jahangir promised to protect Islam and granted general amnesty to his opponents. He was also notable for his patronage of the arts, especially of poetry and painting. During his reign the distinctive style of Mughal painting expanded and blossomed. Jahangir supported a flourishing culture of court painters. Jahangir is famous for his golden ‘chain of justice’. The chain was set up as a link between his

people and Jahangir himself. Standing outside the castle of Agra with sixty bells, anyone was capable of pulling the chain and having a personal hearing from Jahangir himself. Furthermore, Jahangir preserved the Mughal tradition of having a highly centralized form of government. The son of a Hindu Rajput mother who converted to Islam, Jahangir made the precepts of *sunni* Islam the cornerstone of his state policies. A faithful Muslim, as evidenced by his memories, he expressed his gratitude to Allah for his many victories. Jahangir, as a devout Muslim, did not let his personal beliefs dictate his state policies. Sovereignty, according to Jahangir, was a 'gift of God' not necessarily given to enforce God's law but rather to ensure the contentment of the world. In civil cases, Islamic law applied to Muslims, Hindu law applied to Hindus, while criminal law was the same for both Muslims and Hindus. In matter like marriage and inheritance, both communities had their own laws that Jahangir respected. Thus, Jahangir was able to deliver justice to people in accordance of their beliefs, and also keep his hold on empire by unified criminal law. In the Mughal state, therefore, defiance of imperial authority, whether coming from a prince or anyone else aspiring to political power, or a Muslim or a Hindu, was crushed in the name of law and order.

Jahangir's relationship with other rulers of the time is one that was well documented by Sir Thomas Roe, especially his relationship with Persian King, Shah Abbas. Though conquest was one of Jahangir's many goals, he was a naturalist and lover of the arts and did not have quite the same warrior ambition of the Persian king. This led to a mutual enmity that, while diplomatically hidden, was very clear to observers within Jahangir's court. Jahangir was fascinated with art and architecture. He himself is far from modest in his autobiography when he states his prowess at

being able to determine the artist of any portrait by simply looking at a painting. Jahangir took his connoisseurship of art very seriously. Paintings created under his reign were closely catalogued, dated and even signed, proving scholars with fairly accurate ideas as to when and in what context many of the pieces were created, in addition to their aesthetic qualities.

He was not only an admirer of Christian artwork but also a purveyor of it. This was largely due to earlier Jesuit missions during his father's reign. Jesuits had brought with them various books, engravings, and paintings and, when they saw the delight Akbar held for them, sent for more and more of the same to be given to the Mughals, as they felt they were on the 'verge of conversion', a notion which proved to be very false. Instead, both Akbar and Jahangir studied this artwork very closely and replicated and adopted it, adopting much of the early iconographic features and later the pictorial realism for which Renaissance art was known. He was notable for his pride in the ability of his court painters. He was also revolutionary in his adaptation of European style.

Jahangir was an excellent writer and loved nature. He recorded various details of flora and fauna from all over India. He was not only curious, but a scientific observer of minute details of species, a number of his observation is detailed in Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri, also referred to as Jahangirnama. He liked paintings and collected many of them in his palace. Some of them are still found in museums.

1.5 REIGN OF SHAH JAHAN

The golden period of Mughal rule reached its climax during the reign of Shah Jahan. Majumdar writes, "The reign of Shah Jahan is usually considered to have been the golden period of Mughal rule in India, which then reached its climax. There was

no serious challenge to the Emperor's authority before the war of succession. No grave external menace threatened India itself. The period saw the development of the export trade between India and Western Asia and the beginning of the export trade with Europe, and the finance of the state were flourishing.”³³

On 4th February, 1628 Shah Jahan ascended to the throne at Agra with the title of Abu-e- Muzaffar Shahabuddin Muhammad Sahib Kinan-i-Sani. The peace and prosperity of the people were accelerated in this reign.

S.C. Ray Chaudhary says, “In the political sphere Shah Jahan provided an excellent system of administration which was the dream of Akbar through a hoast of honest and efficient officers. He was lucky to have the services of persons like Sadulla Khan. The emperor himself took keen interest in the administration of the state and saw to it that all the departments too were working effectively and efficiently. The Emperor took special interest in the judicial administration and was willing to dispense justice at all times.”³⁴

Under Emperor Shahjahan the Mughal Empire attained its highest union of strength with magnificence. His reign saw some of India's most well-known architectural and artistic accomplishments. The land revenue of the Mughal Empire under Shahjahan was higher than any other Mughal ruler. The magnificence of Shah Jahan's court was commented upon by several of the European travellers and ambassadors from other parts of the world, including Francois Bernier and Thomas Roe. His famous Peacock Throne with its trail blazing in the shifting natural colors of rubies, sapphires and emeralds was valued by the jewelers Tavernier at 6.5 million pounds sterling. His political efforts encouraged the emergence of large centres of commerce and crafts-such as Lahore, Delhi, Agra and Ahmedabad, linked by roads

and waterways to distant places and poets. He moved the capital from Agra to Delhi. Under his rule, Mughal artistic and architectural achievements reached their zenith. Shah Jahan was a prolific builder with a highly refined aesthetic sense. Among his surviving buildings are the Red Fort and the Jama Masjid in Delhi, the Shalimar Garden of Lahore, section of the Lahore Fort and his father's mausoleum.

Shah Jahan left behind a grand legacy of structures constructed during his reign. He was a patron of architecture. His most famous building was the Taj Mahal, now a wonder of the world, which he built out of love for Mumtaz Mahal his wife. Its structure was drawn with great care; and architects from all over the world were called for this purpose. The building took twenty years to complete and was constructed from white marble overlaid with brick. Among his other constructions are Delhi Fort also called the Red Fort or Lal Qila in Delhi, large sections of Agra Fort, the Jama Masjid of Delhi, the Wazir Khan Mosque of Lahore, The Shalimar Garden, Moti Masjid and some sections of Lahore Fort, the Jahangir's Mausoleum and Shah Jahan Mosque, Thatta, Pakistan. He also had the Peacock Throne, Takht-e-Taus made to celebrate his rule.

In so far as the growth and development of the fine arts is concerned, his period witnessed a glorious history. Not only to poets and painters, but to all kind of artists viz architects, musicians etc that Shah Jahan extended his patronage. He himself was a good singer who took great delight in listening to music and patronized musicians. It was also a period suitable for the growth of literature and historical works. S.C. Raychaudhury says, "Both Persian and Hindi literature, prose as well as poetry made good progress. A number of outstanding works of Sanskrit were translated into Persian. Thus Munshi Banvali Das translated Prabodh Chandradava

while Ibn Har Karan translated Ramayana in Persian. Abdur Rashid translated Big Ganit from Sanskrit, while Mulla Farid Munajjim prepared the astral chart entitled Zich-i-Shahjahani.’’³⁵

However, the most outstanding contribution of Shah Jahan lies in the field of architecture which outshines his other accomplishment.

R.C. Majumdar et al says, “It was also marked by pomp and splendor, which were amply attested by brilliant productions in architecture, like the magnificent Taj, One Pearl Mosque of Agra, the Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-khas, the Jami Masjid and the “celebrated Peacock Threne.” All these lead one to believe that peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the Empire.’’³⁶

As an administrator, Shah Jahan tried to perfect the system of administration as laid down by the grandfather Akbar. The mansabdari was systemized and compelled them to maintain the considerable number of troops in accordance with their rank. He contributed enormous amounts to the royal treasury by increasing the land revenue from one third to one half.

1.6 REIGN OF AURANGZEB

Aurangzeb was influenced more by religion and his religious policy was above the consideration of worldly gain. As a zealous Sunni Muslim, one who secured the throne as the champion of Sunni faith against Dara who was liberal, he tried to enforce strictly the Quranic law, according to which every pious Muslim even himself remain in the path of God. The customary celebrations on his birthday and coronation day were simplified. He abolished different practices in the court that he felt working against his religion. R.C. Majumdar says, “From the eleventh year of his reign, he discontinued the practice of Jharoka darshan, a practice by which his

predecessors appeared every morning on the balcony on the wall of the palace to accept the salute of the people, who then gathered on the ground in front. In the same year he forbade music at court and dismissed the old musicians and singers.”³⁷

Aurangzeb followed the example is better than precept maxim. He practiced that which he sought to enforce on others. He maintained a high standard of morality in his private life. He abstained scrupulously from the common vices of his time like wine. R.C. Majumdar says, “He passed an ordinance prohibiting the production, sale and public use of wine and bhang. The emperor also passed strict orders against singing obscene songs and stopped the burning of fagots and processions during certain religious festivals.”³⁸

The new regulations and ordinances affected the people to produce a deep impression on them. This added more difficulty to the imperial government. Everyone accepted the credit of being a sincere and conscientious exponent of the faith that was in the emperor but it is also a fact that the country over which destiny placed him to rule was a place inhabited not by a homogenous population but by a population diverse in their rich religious and cultural faiths that need faithful handling and sympathetic understanding along with liberal rules and regulations. Regarding the failure of Aurangzeb in understanding the assimilation of different faiths, R.C. Majumdar says, “Aurangzeb certainly made a mistake in identifying the interest of the state with those of his faith and in offering these who differed from it. This policy generated feelings of discontent among certain sections of the people, which by distracting his energies during the remainder of his reign proved to be one of the most potent causes of the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire.”³⁹

1.7 The Mughal System of Administration

The administrative system of Mughal was not original. The Muslim would all over follow the methods of Abbasid Khalifas of Iraq or the Fatimid Khalifas of Egypt. But, with the advent of early Turkey to India their cultures and customs interfused with the customs and cultures of India. The Hindus were appointed in the revenue department and the customs and practices of them made a powerful impact on the new administration. Iswari Prasad says, "The Hindus continued to be employed in the revenue department, and their customs and practices exercised a powerful influence on administrative arrangements. The Mughal administration was therefore a mixture of Indian and foreign elements. Its elaborate organization entailed much record keeping and required the monarch to be constantly vigilant. But it was not wholly based on force. There was partial acquiescence of the people, because the new government was more humane, tolerant and beneficent. It respected social usages and allowed the village folks to enjoy their time-honoured right of self-government." ⁴⁰

The King:

He was the head of the administration. He had unlimited powers to enjoy theoretically but always yielded to the wishes of the people that were near to him on the people who were affected by his decrees.

The chief departments of the Mughal government were:-

1. Finance (under the Diwan)
2. The military, pay and accounts office (under the Mir Bakhshi)
3. The Imperial Household (under the Khan-i-Saman or Lord High Steward)
4. Judicial (under the chief Qazi known as the Qazi-ul- Qurat)

5. Religious endowments and charitable grants (under the Sadr-i-Sudur)
6. Censorship of Public Morals (under the Muhatsib)

The inferior to these groups were as follows:

1. Artillery (under the Mir Atish or Darogha-i-Top-Khanah)
2. Intelligence and Posts (under the Darogahi-i-Dak Chowki)
3. Mint (under it's a Darogah).⁴¹

The Diwan was the head of the revenue department. The decisions in matters of assessment and collection of revenue were taken by Diwan. Besides these offices, many other officers were holding responsible positions in the state were-

- 1) The Mustaufi : Auditor General.
- 2) The Awarjah Nawis : Superintendent of daily expenditure at the court.
- 3) The Nasir-i-Buyutat : Superintendent of the Imperial Workshop.
- 4) The Mushri : Chief Admiral and Offices of the Harbours.
- 5) Mir Bahri : Revenue Secretary.
- 6) Mir Barr : Superintendent of Forest.
- 7) Qur Begi : Superintendent of The Royal Study.
- 8) Akht Begi Khwar Salar : Superintendent of the Royal Kitchen.
- 9) The Waqia Nawis : The News recorder.
- 10) Min Haz : Officers who presented all positions to the emperor brought by suitors.⁴²

Beside the empire with the council of ministers, the emperor extended his hand through the 'mansabdars'. Percival Spear says, "The empire could not have

continued so long without such heads but Mughal India was much more than a series of talented rulers. Its next element was the central bureaucracy, controlled by the monarch but spreading into tentacles throughout the empire. It was largely the creation of Akbar, but it was maintained by his successors. A vital part of this was the mansabdars who have already been mentioned. They acted as it were, the emperor's eyes and ears, the oil which caused the bureaucratic wheels to revolve. The emperor controlled them in a number of ways. Akbar paid them their large salaries in cash, so that they lacked a territorial basis for revolt. His successor found this system too arduous to maintain, and gave them assignments on the land revenue, in other words tracts of land from which they collected the revenue in lieu of a salary.”⁴³

The Mughal nobilities:

The Mughal nobility was not hereditary as Mughal officers held high posts not more than three or four years at a time. Their property was not hereditary. Their property was also resumed at death. The next generation did not get the right of the land hereditarily. As a result, they spent their life in ostentation.

“The Mughal nobility was thus an official authority which was hereditary as a class but not as individuals, which was landholding but not feudal,”⁴⁴ Society in Mughal times was based on a feudal system. The King was the summit of this system. The mansabdars or nobles held high offices below the King. The court attached dignity to those who came under its service, Ishari Prasad writes, “There was little honour or dignity outside the imperial service, and every talented youth aspired to join it. This privileged position of extraordinary respectability created a great divergence in the standard of those who lived at court and those who were away from it. The court

was the centre of wealth and culture, whereas away in the country we find modest competence and wretched misery existing side by side.’’⁴⁵

The Mughal Nobles

The Mughal nobles were generally extravagant and lived luxurious lives. Following the example of their patrons, they had large establishments to absorb all the income earned by them. In addition to their heavy expenditure, they followed the custom of presenting or offering presents to the court. It impoverished even the healthiest among them. Their habit of lavish use of foreign goods stimulated foreign trade. Drink, a common vice, was confined to the upper classes.

Iswari Prasad writes, “In fact, many a high station died of intemperance. All the Mughal emperors indulged in liquor more or less with the exception of Aurangzeb who was a total abstainer.”⁴⁶

The nobles took part in different kinds of sports and amusements and gambling was not prohibited. In some occasions the amount of bets was limited by regulations, but it is unknown how far it was executed.’’⁴⁷

People saw the government as a revenue collecting agency. The land was assessed and the government share was fixed. The revenue share was collected by ‘amils’ or by the assistance such as mansabdars, jagirdars or local chiefs. “Whoever the agents might be the actual collection took the form of a bargaining match with the agents, the one pleading poverty, the other state necessity. The distinguishing feature of the Mughal period was that the assessment was on the whole fairer and more accurate than for long before, thanks to the work of Akbar’s revenue minister, the Hindu Todar Mal.”⁴⁸

In the judiciary system during the Mughal rule, the Emperor acted as the chief. The different communities were judged according to their own personal laws and the village maintained its own system.

Percival Spear says, "There was no elaborate system of judicial courts such as the British later introduced, criminal cases in the towns were dealt with by government appointed Qazis or law officers administering the Muslim code. But each community had its own personal law which it administered through its own agents. There were the Qazis for the Muslims and the Pandits and caste or village panchayats for the Hindu. In the country side, government court only existed at the district headquarters or other small towns; the imperial officers were only concerned with large scale crime such as gang robbery. Order was maintained in the village largely by the village elders themselves, whose arrangements were fascinating and intricate, or also by agents of a local landholder. Thus the village saw the government mainly in the guise of a revenue collecting agent, who fleeced him occasionally, as a judge in a dispute or as an army which plundered him." ⁴⁹

The Middle Classes: The middle class was not affected by the vice of ostentation. Their standard of living was determined by the nature of the work done by them. Though it is not easy to ascertain their salaries it is a clean fact that their circumstances were not prosperous or easy.

The Lower classes: The lower classes lived a much low life in comparison to the classes above them. Iswari Prasad writes, "Then clothing was scanty; woollen garments were not used at all and shoes were not much in evidence in certain parts of India. But there was no scarcity of food except in time of famine and consequently no starvation under normal condition." ⁵⁰

Among the Hindu society Sati and Child marriage still prevailed. Both the Hindus and Muslims wore jewellery and metallic ornaments. Use of liquor, opium and other drugs was common as restriction against them does not seem to have been enforced rigorously. Among the emperors, Akbar was interested in learning but the scheme of popular education was not seen. Both the Hindus and Muslims believed in astrology and the Brahmans never undertook a journey without enquiring about the auspicious date and hour of their journey. Among the Muslims, worshipping and belief in prophet's was common.

The productions of valuable kinds of staff were encouraged in the Karkhanas. Excellent work was turned out in the imperial workshops at Lahore, Agra, Fatehpur and Ahmadabad. There was improvement in taste and quality of production. Manufacturing of cloth was done privately also just like shawls at Lahore, Carpets at Fatehpur Sikri and cotton cloth in Gujarat and Burhanpur; delicate fabrics at Dacca.

Regarding the commercial activities during the Mughal period, spear says, "There was also much commercial activity and important industries. Relative to the economy as a whole they were small but they were important in themselves and provided much of the economic surplus used to run the government and supports its wars. The moment of trade was severely limited by transport difficulties; bulk articles could only be transported down the rivers or overseas. Such were sugar from Bengal and Madras saltpetre from Bengal. Intermediate articles such as indigo, opium, tobacco, and cotton goods could be transported at a price which meant that they went by water or became luxury goods through expense. Luxuries such as gold, silver and ivory, fine silks and muslins were carried by camels over the north passes and by bullock wagons elsewhere.... The main industry for which India had been famous

from classical times, and of which she was a supplier to both east and west, was cotton. In the south the spice trade was important though the actual industry was limited to the Malabar coast. India had on active trade with the middle East and Europe, the main articles of export being textiles, indigo, saltpetre and spices.’’⁵¹

Tobacco was also introduced in India and Akbar himself took an initiative. Ishwari Prasad writes, “Tobacco was introduced either late in 1604 or early in 1605, Akbar himself made an experiment in making tobacco against the advice of his physician but never adopted it. After this tobacco began to be cultivated and sold in India.’’⁵²

After the coming of the Mughal the Persian influence in language, culture and architecture had widened. Persian was known in India long before the Mughal came. “It was used by the Turks or the Sultanat for business and literature and Delhi was in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a Persian literary centre. But these people were too few in number, their influence too limited in scope, and their outlook too far removed from the Hindu population for Persian to make any impact on the country as a whole....By the time of the Mughal the whole climate of feeling and relations had changed. Within the two communities were beginning to integrate, so that one was for more ready to borrow from the other than previously.’’⁵³

The first layer of Persian influence was the Persian language. It was widely used as the result of the Mughal administrative dominance. “Its culture prestige caused it to be studied by aspiring youth everywhere as a symbol of culture as well as careerist tool. The beauty and range of its literature captivated the most utilitarian of its pupils, which its Pre-Muslim background gave it an attraction for Hindus which Arabic could never have. The big step in Persian literature was the use of Persian by

the Hindu nobility and the Hindu ministerial class. This was cemented by Akbar's Rajput partnership. From that time Persian became the diplomatic language throughout India, the language of the Rajput courts like French – in – Henry III's England and the stock – in – trade of the clerical Hindu .''⁵⁴

The Mughal architecture was excellent in design and magnificence. The buildings that were created in different parts of the country bear testimony to their magnificent architectural productions. During the Mughal rule, the personal taste of the emperors exercised a powerful influence on Indian art and culture. Iswari Prasad writes, "After Babar, Persian influence on Indian arts increased and continued to the end of Akbar's reign. Humayun liked the Persian style, and his son Akbar was influenced by Persian ideals, although his genius adopted them to the Indian craft tradition. In the hands of Akbar's successors, Indian architecture and painting became essentially Indian in character and in the exquisite creations of their reigns we find nothing that is distinctly Persian. The Mughal style, which was an amalgam of many influence, was more sumptuous and decorative than the style that preceded it and its delicacy and ornamentation furnish a striking contrast to the massiveness and simplicity of the art of pre-Mughal days."''⁵⁵

Babar was not satisfied with Indian art and skill and imported persons of skill, the famous architect from Constantinople for constructing his buildings. During Akbar's reign, his palace at Fatehpur Sikri is the most important buildings. The tomb at Sikandar is unique among the sepulchres of Asia. The Agra fort was completed in eight years and its foundation was laid in 1564. Jahangir was different from his father in taste and showed a greater love for painting than for architecture.

Shah Jahan was the most magnificent builder among the Mughals. Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas in the Red fort of Delhi, the Jam-i-Masjid, the Moti Masjid, the Taj Mahal and some other minor buildings in various parts of the empire is the magnificatn works of Shah Jahan.

Regarding the Persian influence in India art, Percival Spear says, “Mughal architecture can be followed from into early almost pure Persian phase in a building like Humayun’s tomb (1560) through the Indo – Muslim style of Akbar’s day to its apotheosis in the Taj Mahal, which could have been built nature else but in India and not there without the background of Persian influence in painting, Persian ideas combined with the local Indian tradition to produce the Mughal miniatures which continued into the nineteenth century. The Persian love of water flames found expression in the Mughal formal garden. One of Babur’s first acts on reaching Agra was to lay out a garden one of the last acts of the last emperor was to do the same. The story continues with the decorative arts; Persian style and conventions can be seen equally in Hindu palaces and garden house with Muslim.”⁵⁶

With the death of Shah Jahan, art did not find the suitable patron as his successor Aurangzeb was a strict disciple of religion and had no interest and money to patronise art.

“The fifteen the century as well as the sixteenth century saw a good environment for great religious stir as Vaishnavism had a powerful appeal to the hearts of millions of Bengal and Northern India. Both the devotees of Rama and Krishna cults devided among themselves into a number of sects and inculcated worship according to their own ideas and beliefs. Vallabhacharya, the founder of the Krishna cult, was succeeded by his son Vitthal Nath, and his disciples were known as

‘Astachhap’ (eight seals) and among them Sri Das was the most famous one.’’⁵⁷ Of the Rama cult, the leading exponent was Tulsi Das who believed and preached that Rama was an incarnation of Vishnu.

There were different other reformers besides Tulsi Das who departed from orthodox Hinduism and propagated then a faith by founding different sects. Here the influence of Muslim can be traced. As for instance, “Dadu (1544 – 1603) better known as Dadu Dayal by reason of his kindness towards all living beings, denounced idolatry and caste, rejected the formal ritual of Hinduism, and laid stress upon the simple faith in God.”⁵⁸

In Bengal Chaitanya was followed by his disciples to carry on the ‘Bhakti Mission’. Bhakti was all in all to them and without it there could be no deliverance. In Deccan, Eknath was the pioneer of the great religious movement of the 16th century. Bhakti was the main pillar and by means of which, Sudras and all others could get salvation. In Maharastra, Tuka Ram’s ‘Abhangas’ or unbroken humans are still sung and it has the capacity to elevate the soul and purify the emotion through its fervent piety and to give solace to millions of people under distress and sorrows. Ram Das was another saint who had profound influence on the people of Maharastra and he was the spiritual guide of Shivaji. The mysticism of the Persian poets exercised influence upon both the Hindu and the Muslim just like the bhakti movement, Percival Spear says, “The mystical and free-thinking ideas of the sufis were carried into Hindu and Muslim India through the medium of the great Persian poets. On the religious side these were easily educated with bhakti or devotional school of Hindu saints; they illustrated existing concepts rather than modified them. But they certainly

encouraged an eclecticism between the two bodies and some mutual understanding.’’⁵⁹

Persian influence is still embedded in Indian culture by its use of Hindi which bear the stamp of Urdu and by its influence of administration. Percival Spear says, “Persian tastes, idea and attitudes are so imbedded in north India that they are often thought to be local products. Though Persian is no longer spoken, its daughter language of Urdu through Hindi continues its influence and is widely spoke in India as well as being one of the official language of Pakistan. Hindustani, the everyday language of the North is deeply indebted to it. But perhaps the most lasting of Persian influence was the administrative. Persian nomenclature and administrative concept were so pervasive that they were found among the fighting Marathas when struggling to be free of the Mughals, the Mughals re-acclimatised in India the idea of an all pervading ordered administration. The British could not have organised India as they did if the people had not already been as it were apprenticed to the idea of unity. Nor in consequence could independent India have ground so quickly in unity and strength. Mr Nehru was sometimes called a great Mughal; he was their heir in a truer sense than perhaps he himself realized. The united India of today would not have been possible without them.”⁶⁰

On the eve of Babur’s invasion there was no centric government in India. There were a number of small states headed by independent and powerful kings. S.C. Ray Choudhury says, “On the eve of Babur’s invasion India was divided into a number of small states which were constantly involved in mutual warfare. There was no strong central government which could keep these states under check and present a united front to the enemy.”⁶¹

Some of the leading kingdoms as noted by Babar in his memories were the Afgan kingdom extending from Behreh to Bihar, the kingdom of Jaunpore and Bengal in the east, kingdom of Malwa in central India, the kingdom of Gujrat. In addition to it there were a number of Muslim kingdoms in Deccan arising out of the ruins of the Bahmani kingdom.’’⁶²

On the eve of Babur’s invasion, the political unity in the century was lacking. Even some of them were jealous of each other, so, the environment for foreign invasion was ease. S.C. Ray Choudhury says, “No doubt, some of the contemporary rulers were valiant fighters and could have posed a serious challenge to the advance of Babar, but they were disunited and jealous of each other, some of these rulers like Daulat khan, the governor of Punjab and Rana Sanga of Mewar ever extended an invitation to Babar to invade India. In view of these dissensions and bickerings the task of Babar was rendered rather easy.’’⁶³

On the eve of Babur’s invasion, the Indian society was passing through a period of transition. The Afghan nobles who were large in numbers and their followers that came to India along with them were seriously merging into Indian social system and were slowly getting indianised. The number of Muslims had also increased as a result of Indian converting to Islam. The liberal policy pursued by some rulers like Zainul-Abidin of Kashmir, Alauddin Hussain Shah of Bengal etc helped in the growing rapprochement between the Hindus and the Muslims. The reformers of the Bhakti movement, however, did the greatest service by bringing the unity between the Hindu – Muslim community. Among the reformers Kabir and Nanak are worth mentioning. They preached that the two religions were like two different ways for the

attainment of the same goal and thus they helped in greater understanding between the followers of the two religions.

The Muslims held a dominant position and most of the important ranks of the state were held by them. They generally believed in Quranic laws and showed reference to the Muslim clerics. The Sultan often came into contact with the holy men in matters of religion but they were not bound to follow their advice. The Hindu caste system had greater influence on the Muslims and they were divided into Sayed, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan.

The caste system was already prominent in the Hindu society on the eve of Babur's invasion. Its foundation was laid in the vedic period. Based on the division of labour, the Hindu society was divided into four 'Varnas' – Brahmins, Kashatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudra; with the passing of times, the divisions became rigid. However, compelled by the changing situations a greater reconciliation took place. S.C. Ray Chaudhury says, "During the rule of the Afghan rules these division got further rigid and the Hindu of higher caste took every possible case to avoid mixing with the Muslims to serve their religion and social system. However, in course of time the hostility of the Hindus towards the Muslims died. A large number of Hindus belonging to the low castes embraced Islam because it promised them better treatment and economic facilities. By this time even the high caste Hindu had reconciled with the changed situation and started mixing with the Muslims and descendants of the Muslim immigrants. The position of the Brahmas in the Indian society had also gone under a great change. They were not more given exemption from taxes and were not treated as a privileged class. This naturally resulted in a change in the traditional duties of the Brahmins. Instead of confining themselves to purely scholarly pursuits,

they took to agriculture through hired labour. Quite often they also cultivated the fields. The decline of the Vedic studies during the Sultanate period encouraged some of the Brahmins to study Persian and they came to occupy important official positions.’’⁶⁴

The condition of women was miserable as a girl, bride and widow. Only as a mother she was offered greater respect. The Rajput rulers like Sangram Singh took their meals only after they had paid their respect to their mothers. The Hindu women practised ‘pardah’ as a force of circumstances to protect the honour of them and to maintain social order. The Hindu generally practiced monogamy with the exception of few princes and wealthy persons. Child marriage was in Vogue in both Hindu and Muslim societies. Long before the age of puberty, girls were married and the parents selected the bride or the bridegroom. The practice of Sati was also maintained in the Hindu society, especially among the noble castes of Rajputs. Sati was considered as a proof of deep attachment and love for the dead husband. Widow remarriage was not in practice among the Hindus but the Muslim widows were permitted. The practice of divorce was common among the Muslims but not among the Hindus.’’⁶⁵

The diet of the Hindus and Muslims was also identical with the exception that the Muslims took meat. Though some of the Hindus also took meat but their number was very small. Majority of them were vegetarians. The normal food of the mass was ‘Khichri’. In the south, the people were mainly rice eaters, while in the north they also took Chapati (roti) made of wheat. Regarding the food habits of people relating to Hindu and Muslims, S.S Ray Choudhury, “Though the people in general were vegetarian, meat eating and drinking were also common. Generally, woman of Brahman, Kashatriyas, Vaishyas castes take drinks. The Brahman generally abstained

from meat. The most common food of the people was 'Khichri' prepared with rice and pulses. The people of northern India, however, mainly took Chapatis with dal and vegetables and the Muslims took Kabab and roti.'' ⁶⁶

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CHAPTER-II

INDO-IRANIAN LITERATURE DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD

To know the beginning of Persian literature on Indian soil, one is needed to go back to Hijri fifth/eleventh century AD. “The new ground, which proved so much fertile for the growth of Persian literature during the coming nine hundred years, was discovered by the dynasty of princes with their seat of power in the mountains of Southern Afghanistan, precisely, Ghaznah.... The men of the Ghaznavid period are remembered for bringing about the change in Socio-Cultural domain of India. They turned the page of history from the ancient times to medieval. Their collective genius brought into existence a brilliant culture which is known as the Indo-Islamic culture. They initiated the slow and difficult process of the confluence of the two civilizations rooted in Hinduism and Islam.”¹

The period of the Great Mughals witnessed the culmination of the development of all forms of Persian literature in India. It is true that his native Chagatay was the language in which the founder of the Timurid dynasty, Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur (he reigned in India from 932/1525 until 937/1530), wrote his excellent memoirs “Tuzuk-i- Babur”, but he was nevertheless also an accomplished poet in Persian. By far the largest part of his Persian poetry bears the mark of Sufi mysticism, of which Babur was an ardent of Rumi's Mathnavi. Babur derived the majority of the ideas in his quatrains and ghazals from Hafiz and his contemporary Jami.

“After Babur won the battle of Panipath a new era began in Indian History. Panipat was just the beginning. Three decades covered the period till Humayun’s death. These decades exercised far reaching influence in shaping the cultural life of Hindustan. The highly developed intellectual taste of the two emperors awoke the people to a new sense of refinement in all spheres of life, particularly, literature.”²

Many writers of this period might not be reckonable for their lasting influence but they prepared the taste of their readers to appreciate works of much advanced degree in the time to come. That is the idea of manifesting an independent genius, the mixed or Indo-Persian genius, had, up to this stage, not crossed their mind.

“In the prose and poetry of this period, there seemed to be an even balance of richness and charm. As we notice if the father was a prose writer, indeed of Chaghatai Turki, the son was a poet, the only member of Mughal royalty, who left a Persian Diwan of verses. Besides them, two more examples may be easily cited. The achievement of Qazi Samarqandi was a stupendous work of prose. On the other hand, Khan-i-Khanan Bairam Khan won distinction as a brilliant poet. His domain was ghazal, the most outstanding genre of contemporary fashion, which he composed in amazingly attractive style. The use of simple and mobile rhyming endowed him with definite superiority over other well-known poets, who occupied the scene later on.”³

The important prose writers of Babur period were –

Babur Zahir ud-Din Muhammad : “The founder of the Mughal rule in India. He was the son of ‘Umar Shaikh Mirza, a scion of the house of Timur and ruler of a small principedom, Farghanah, in Central Asia. Possessing versatile qualities and wielding sword and pen with equal confidence; Babur fought battles, composed poetry and collected books in his life. His lasting service to literature was his Tuzuk memories,

written in his mother tongue, Chaghatai Turki. He deliberately chose it in order to reveal his natural gift, the frank and cheerful temperament. The magic of his personality contributed in raising it to the status of a literary language. His plan succeeded and posterity recognized him among the masters of Turkish prose. The work was rendered into the more familiar and fashionable medium of Persian at the command of Babur's grandson Akbar, and it was done by and equally great genius, Abdur- Rahim Khan –i- Khanan in 998/1590. The translation at once gained currency as Tuzk-i-Baburi, but its other and popular title in Persian was Babur-namah.

Khwand Amir, Ghiyas ud-Din b. Humam –ud-Din: He was grandson of the celebrated scholar and historian, Mir Khwand, whose work of history, Rauz-us-safa, acquired much popularity, Khwand Amir's birth place was the city of Hirat, where he witnessed in his youth the fading glory of the Timurid's. His early life passed through the tumultuous period of conflict which began between the rising power of Shah Ismail, founder of the Safawid dynasty and the equally impetuous Shaibani Khan, leader of the Uzbek Turkis. Khwand Amir immigrated to India in pursuit of peaceful career after Babur displaced the Lodis and inaugurated a new era. The emperor and his successor Humayun, showed him kind treatment and acknowledged his merits by giving him the post of secretary. According to his last will, he was laid to rest beside the grave of sheikh Nizam ud-din Auliya. Khwand Amir was the author of many books namely----

(1)Khulasat ul-Akbar fi Bayan ul-Akhyar, notices of persons who impressed the author when he lived as a man in Heart; (2). Insha-i-Ghiyas ud-din/Namah-i-Nami, a guide book for the instruction of prospective civil servants,(3) . Makarim ul-Akhlaq on the subject of ethics, (4). Ma'asir ul-Muluk rambling anecdotes about

famous kings, (5). Dastur ul- Wuzara, biographical account of important ministers, their ideas and achievements, (6). Humayun Namah/Qunun-i-Humayuni, Social and cultural sketch of that emperor's reign and (7). Habib-us-Siyar fi Akhbar-i- afrad ul- Bashar, a general history from pre-Islamic past down to the author's own days, 930/1524.”⁴

Zain Khan Khwafi: He was a contemporary of Babur and lived at his court as a poet composing under the pen-name, wafa-i-. He attempted to transfer his sovereign's Tuzuk into Persian, but could not complete it. Commemorating Babur's victory in the battle of Khanwah, he wrote a Fateh-namah, and on his master's tract concerning the Hanafi jurisprudence, he added a commentary Sharh-i-Mubayyan.

Nur ud-Din b. Qutb ud-Din Khwafi, Shaikh: He was a religious scholar of the time of Babur and enjoyed the emperor's patronage. His early life as a student passed in Heart. He wrote a book on Hanafi jurisprudence dedicating it to his master. Its double title was Figh-i-Baburi/Fatawa-i-Baburi, ca. 925/1519.

Pir Miram Siyah Qazwini He was a sufi of the Malamti order and contemporary of Babur. The emperor and his son, Humayun acknowledged his spiritual and scholarly merits. Later generations showed keen interest in his works, (1). A collection of historical letters, Insha-i-Miran Siyah and (2). A Diwan of verses.

Ali Tahir: He was a scholar associated with the court of Babur, the empire builder. He made an abridged translation of Zakariya Qazwini's Sab'at ul aqalim. Qazwini (d.682/1283) was a geographer and author of many works related to the subject, chiefly, Asar ul-Bilad. Ali Tahir dedicated his translation, bearing wonderful reports of Seven climes, to Babur, and named it Tuhfat ul-Ajaib, completed in 928/1521.

Ghiyas ud-Din b. Kamal ud-Din, Saiyed : He was in the service of Mirza Muhammad Kamran, son of Babur. All Timurid princes being lovers of art and culture, Mirza Kamran composed poetry and gathered talented men around him. Political ambitions, nevertheless kept him always busy in rebellions against his elder brother. Fed up at last, Humayun blinded Kamran and sent him to Mecca, where he spent four years before death. 964/1556. In compliance to his request, Saiyed Ghiyas ud-Din wrote a book in fourteen chapters dealing with fajwid reaction of the Quran. Its title was Maqsud ul-Hafizin.

Haidar Dughlat Mirza: “ He lived in Chaghatai clan of the Turks and was a cousin of Babur, founder of the Mughal empire in India. As the city of Kashghar was captured by a rival Timurid prince, Abdur Rashid, he left from there and took refuge with Humayun at Agra. Having witness the battle of Chausa and Qannauj (947/1540) in which Humayun was overpowered by Sher Shah, there was again before him the dilemma of an honourable existence. In Humayun’s flight from India, Mirza Haidar accompanied him up to Lahore, whence he took his own way towards Kashmir. Bold and adventurous like every member of the house of Timur, Mirza Haidar succeeded in carving out an independent territory for himself. It included Kashmir and part of the region of Tibet. He was not without scholarly habits, for he narrated a history of his Kinsmen, whose seat of power was Kashghar, dedicating it to the memory of Abd ur-Rashid Khan, the contemporary king of that place. Mirza Haidar possessed full awareness of history and was well informed about the topography of North India and Kashmir. There are autobiographical details of interesting nature in the last portion of the book. Its title was Tarikh-i-Rashidi.” ⁵

Some of the most eminent poets of Babur's court were--

Atishi Qandhari: "He belonged to Babur's court . He arrived in the company of Babur and fought at Panipat. After the battle was over, he approached his master and reminded him of the promise to return. Babur summoned his commanders and delivered a short speech. He announced his intention to stay; but allowed them full liberty to go back. Let everybody decide for himself. Atishi spurred his horse and took road to Kabul. Unluckily, he could not reach his destination and died in Lahore. He was a poet and composed tolerable verses.

Shihab Mu'amma'i : Shihab Mu'amma'i had lifelong association with Babur. His chief distinction was in the field of Mu'amma riddle, a literary device very much in fashion during the Timurid period. Also, he was a competent scholar of religious sciences. The chronogram of his death was Shihab-i- Saqib 942.

Baqai Maulana: He Possessed mastery over diverse forms of poetry. One of his masnawis on the pattern of Nizami's Makhzam-i-Asrar gained much popularity among the literary men of Babur's court.

Khwajah Kalan Beg: He was one of the nobles who remained always loyal to Babur during his vicissitudes. The Khwajah's hometown was Herat. Endowed with highly cultivated literary taste, his verses often won the applause of his master on whose death the Khwajah composed an elegy."⁶

Humayun : 'Humayun' , "the fortunate" was the eldest son of Babur and he had three brothers, Viz, Kamran, Askari and Hindal. He was born at Kabul in March 1508. The name of his mother was Mahim Begum who was probably a Shia. Young Humayun learnt Turki, Arabic and Persian. On account of his careless habits, he did not acquire the exactness of a scholar. He was interested in Mathematics, Philosophy, astronomy

and astrology. “Humayun had a cultivated mind and, like his father, was not only an admirer of poetry but himself wrote pleasant verses. His sense of appreciation of others poetry was also high.”⁷

“Humayun was also well-versed in Arabic, Turki and Persian languages. Some of his Ghazala and Rubais in Persian were popular even in the time of Akbar. Humayun had also scholars like Khuda Mir, Abdul Latif, Sheikh Wassan, etc. in his court. He was a great lover of books and even on the eve of his expulsion from India he took away some select books with him along with his librarian, Baz bahadur Lala Beg. He had a developed library which had a good collection of books. The emperor used to spend some time daily in the Library.”⁸

“Humayun was greatly devoted to learning and education and was especially interested in Geography and Astronomy. He possessed a rich library of his own. He established a Madrassa at Delhi and the pleasure house in the Purana Qila was converted into a library. All this indicates his interest in education.”⁹

Some prose writers of Humayun’s court were---

Pavandah Hasan Ghaznawi, Mirza : “Important prose writer of Humayun’s court. He was a nobleman of the days of Humayun and witnessed the early decades of Akbar. He attempted a Persian version of Babur’s Turkish autobiography Waqiat-i Baburi.

Ikhtiyar al-Husaini :He was eminent prose writer of Babur’s time and survived till the days of Humayun. He wrote a book on ethics and politics, philosophy and dedicated it to his royal patron. Its title was Akhlaq-i-Humayuni, completed in 912/1556.

Ibrahim Ibn Jarir :He was a scholar of the time of Humayun, whom he dedicated his general history. The work contained abundant information about the emperor's reign. Its titles, arbitrarily mentioned by various sources, are: Tarikh-i- Humayuni/Tarikh-i- Ibrahimi, ca.957/1550.

Muhammad Beg: He served as a physician at the court of the Mughal emperor, Humayun and was the author of a number of medical books. Some of they were utilized as texts by teachers of medicine and their fame lasted for centuries that followed. Among they were, (1) A treatise on surgical bleeding, Dastur ul-Fasd and (2). Another work discussing the properties of organic and inorganic substances, Khwas ul-Ashya, 944/1537.”¹⁰

Abdul-Fattah b. Isma'i'l Hussaini: “He belonged to Lahore and earned his living as a physician in the days of Humayun. He was the author of a medical textbook: Ahqaq ut-Tajribah, completed c. 945/1538.”¹⁰

Abdul-Awwal Husaini Zaidpuri Saiyed: He lived in Gujrat, where his family had shifted from their place of origin, Zaidpur in the District of Jaunpur. After Humayun had re-established his position and again seized power from the Afghans, ‘Abd ul-Awwal developed contacts with Bairam Khan Khan –i-Khanan, who treated the scholar with generosity, and at whose invitation he came from Gujrat to Delhi. He wrote a biography of the Prophet, Siyar-i-Nabawai. Its source was an earlier work: Sufar us-Sa’dah, written by Majd ud-din Firuzabadi (d.817/1414), more famous for his Arabic dictionary, al-Qamus Firuzabadi selected a set of traditions and placed them under five headings, which showed the prophet in action. Abdu l-Awwal doubled his arrangement devoting ten chapters to the range of his Siyar –i-Nabawi. His other serious contribution besides many smaller treatises, was a commentary on

Sahih-Bukhari, one of the six canonical books compiled by Muhammad b. Ismail Bukhari (d.256/869). Its title was Faiz and Bari.

Muhammad b. Ashraf Husaini: He belonged to Kabul and served under Babur and Humayun in succession. He carried forward the tradition of Al-Biruni and pursued researches in the field of precious metals and minerals, particularly, ascertaining the qualities of diamonds Babur's conquest of India and his possession of the treasury of the Lodies enabled the scholar to fulfill his objects. The studies appeared under the title: Jawahir-namah-i-Humayuni."¹¹

Humayun had a cultivated mind and like his father, was not only an admirer of poetry but he wrote pleasant verses. His sense of appreciation of others poetry was also high.

There were famous poets of humayun's court were like ---

Mirza Kamran: "Mirza Kamran, the younger brother of Emperor Humayun, was a brave, ambitious and liberal prince. He freely associated with men of learning. Simultaneously he was a meritorious poet, both in Persian and Turki. He had a Diwan to his credit. For more than two decades he had caused much anxiety to Humayun by his excessively ambitious behavior. At last he was captured, blinded and sent in exile in 960/1553 to Mecca, where he died three years later. When he was leaving for Mecca, Humayun visited him to bid him farewell. Kamran presented an ode in praise of his brother which opened with the following verses:-

*(The fold of the poor man's turban brushes the sky, when the shadow of a monarch, like you, falls on his head)."*¹²

Farighi, Shaikh ‘Abd ul-Wahid :- “Impressed by his unworldly and human character, Humayun employed him as poet in his court. His death occurred in Agra and he was buried in front of the Khanqah built by Shaikh Zain Khawafi, 940/ 1533.”

Haidar Tuni : He was well known for his poetry as well as mastery over music. He ridiculed the chief astrologer of Humayan’s court and the Satire was acknowledged as a witty performance. It greatly amused the emperor’s literary circle.

Sabuhi Chaghata : He belonged to Herat, modern Afganistan and lived as a poet at the court of Humayun with the triumphant re-entry of his patron. Sabuhi came to India and witnessed the early decade of Akbar’s reign. He enjoyed the literary company of Qasim-i-Kahi, who obliged Sabuhi by composing a chronogram on his death which occurred at Agra. He was called Sabuhi the drunkard, Sabuhi-i-Maikhwar 973/1565.

Tarumi, Mulla ‘Ali’ Muhaddis : “He belonged to Tarum, near Samarqand and was patronized by Humayun for his scholarship. His contemporaries acknowledged him as a traditionist although he was successful enough in composing poetry. He visited India second time in the reign of Akbar and Mulla ‘Alim Kabuli, the court poet composed chronogram of his death, which occurred in Agra. He was the author of a commentary on Imam Abu Hanifa’s Figh-i-Akbar.”¹³

Shaikh Bahlul : Shaikh Bahlul, the elder brother of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus (d. 1562), was a man of great spiritual attainments and lived at Agra. Humayun held him in high esteem for his learning and piety. In 945/1539, when Humayun was in the east, Mirza Hindal tried to enthrone himself at Agra. Shaikh Bahlul protested where upon Hindal got him murdered.

Shaikh Bahlul was a poet of eminence, he wrote lyrical-religious poems and left a Diwan of Ghazals. The following verses throw light on his trend of thought in poetry.

(I have driven out all other thoughts from my heart so that your thoughts alone reside in it).

Moulana Nadiri Samarqandi: Maulana Nadiri Samarqandi was another poet of repute attached to Humayun's court. He was regarded as one of the wonders of the age on account of his profound learning. He wrote enchanting poetry. He died in 966/1559.

The following verses are from his pen:

(I am grieved, and my heart, on your account, suffers from a hundred sorrows without the rubies of your lips. I am constantly in pain. Poor and dejected I am in this life. I hope death will bring me relief).''¹⁴

Akbar the Great (1556-1605 A.D.)

Akbar was born on 15th October A.D., 1542 at the house of Raja Virsal of Amarkot when his father Humayun was running from place to place as a fugitive after losing his empire to Sher Shah Suri. Therefore, the childhood years of Akbar were very much difficult for him till Humayun captured Kabul and finally Delhi and Agra in A.D. 1555. But then, Humayun died very soon in January A.D. 1556. Akbar therefore was declared the Mughal emperor on 14th February A.D. 1556 when he was hardly fourteen years of age. Akbar's difficulties, however, were not over. At the time of his coronation, he was in Punjab. Before he could reach Delhi, Hemu, the Vazir of Adil Shah Sur, captured Delhi and declared himself as an independent ruler.

“Akbar the Great was one of the greatest rulers of Indian history. He has become a hero whose memory is immortalized as a great king in the hearts of the people of India. The lapse of three hundred years has not diminished it in any way. It has been rightly stated that “he possessed that broad-minded sympathy, that capacity to trust and to evoke trust that generous confidence in loyal people, which enabled him to weld together a great and durable empire out of the poor fragments of military conquests left to him by his father.”¹⁵

“The experimenting of novel ideas during the reign of Akbar fairly influenced the quality of literature, specially, poetry of the period. It was the age of universal renaissance, which awakened the minds of the people in many parts of the world, both in the East and West. After Moulana Jami’s death in Herat (898/1492), the intellectual activity inaugurated by the descendants of Timur had lost its vigor. A fresh environment for the flourishing of art and literature was provided by the India of Akbar. From his time the Mughal Court became the centre of gravity to attract talents from Central Asia and Iran.”¹⁶

“The realm of literature, the outstanding characteristic of Akbar’s Period was the abundance of sophistication found among the writers. They were invariably matured scholars and displayed rare degree of intellectual competence in writing both prose and poetry. Although superior of poetry over prose was obvious, none the less every prose work of the period was a specimen of flowless expression. The correct choice of vocabulary at the command of the writers left no doubt about their ability to communicate in easy manner. From the number of books covering various fields of knowledge we may estimate their enthusiasm for writing. The Mughal emperors and their nobles paid unusually high regards to men of letters. Besides the poets, who

enjoyed perfect liberty in their company, scholars of all disciplines were eagerly welcomed by them. That peculiar habit of the ruling classes was responsible for generating confidence among the writers and raising the standard of their works.’’¹⁷

Prose writers of Akbar’s court were—

Gulbadan Begum : She was Babur’s daughter her mother being Dildar Begum. She was a child of eight years at the time of Babur’s death. Humayun her half brother, arranged her marriage with Khizr Khwajah Khan his kinsman by blood and a high noble of his court. Akbar requested the old lady to record her personal reminiscences concerning the events of Babur and Humayun. She readily obliged her nephew and wrote an interesting monograph in Chaste and charming Persian. It appeared under the title Humayun-namah.

Mubarak Mulla Shaikh: He was the father of Shaikh Faizi and Abu’l Fazl and occupied prominent position among the scholars of Akbar’s reign. He originally belonged to a small town, Nagaur, Rajasthan, where his ancestors have settled as emigrates from Yaman, South of Arabia. From his place of residence, Shaikh Mubarak moved as a young student to Ahmadabad, Gujrat, where he obtained instruction under Abu’l Fazl Astrabadi and Abul Fazl Gazruni, the two disciples of the great teacher Jalal ud-Din Dawani (d. 908/1502). They had moved from Shiraz to Ahmadabad and were employed as professors in the college of the city. Their teachings, particularly in the field of philosophy, left permanent impact on Shaikh Mubarak. In his time the orthodoxy was very much agitated, and reaction was strong in Gujrat, against the Mahdawi movement, initiated by Saiyed Muhammad Jaunpuri (d. 910/ 1504), and the Mahdawi followers were ruthlessly persecuted. Shaikh Mubarak’s attitude towards them was mild like a true philosopher. Later on the

Shaikh came to Agra and found employment as teacher in a madrasah where employments were customarily meager. The source of livelihood proved all the more insufficient as the Shaikh had many children to support and feed an accomplished jurist, his exceptional quality was open mind which involved him in serious controversies with men of his class and he felt the executioner's sword almost close to his neck on many occasions. Circumstance changed altogether when Akbar ascended the throne. For, the emperor desired his assistance and Mulla Mubarak had the courage and courtesy enough to extend it. He drafted the historic document, Mahzar act of supremacy, which authorized the emperor to exercise both religious and temporal powers. Also, he held that the sub-continent being Dar-ul Aman land of peace, where Muslims and non-Muslims lived on friendly terms and the latter were loyal subjects of their Muslim Sovereign in given situation, the usual. Needless to say, his views were angrily debated by the orthodox, who accused him of opportunism and flattery He was the author of many books in Arabic and Persian. Noteworthy among them were (1). A commentary on the Qur'an Manba-Nafa' is ul-'Uyun and (2). Translation of a zoological work written by Kamal ud-Din Mohammad b. Isa Damiri (d-808/1305): Hayat ul- Haiwan.'',¹⁸

Abul Fazl,Shaikh: (d.1011/1602) He was one of the famous poet of Akbar's court. He was the trusted courtier of Akbar and principal functionary of his empire. Born in poverty, for his father, Shaikh Mubarak Nagauri, had a large family and meager income from the profession of teaching, Abu'l Fazl passed through shocking experiences in early life. Shaikh Mubarak was involved in religious debates and suffered at the hands of infuriated fanatics. Circumstances compelled the young brothers, Faizi and Abu'l Fazl, to seek shelter at the royal court, where they soon

found themselves on the road to eminence. Shaikh Abu'l Fazl, by his innate intelligence, won the emperor's confidence and rose to the highest position in Akbar's inner circle. He based the policy of his master's government on the principle of Sulh-i-kulz universal peace. The logic of the Shaikh, raising storm of intellectual controversy, motivated the emperor to adopt more friendly and accomodating attitude towards non-Muslims, particularly the Rajputs. Drawing inspiration from the broad thinking of the Sufis, he emphasized that all religions were like lamps enlightening man's path to Ultimate Reality. His adversaries condemned the Shaikh as a free thinker. During Akbr's last days, he incurred the wrath of the rebellious Prince Salim who hired a bandit chief to perpetrate his murder. As author, Abu'l Fazl's pen flowed with a force making indelible impression of his ideas. His unprecedented diction aided by careful choice of words demonstrated his genius and raises him to the rank of great writers. The works left by him were: (1). The account of his master's reign in chronological order and a record of monumental value: Akbar namah, (2). Details of customs and regulations directing the administration and giving statistics of the empire: Ain-i-Akbari, (3). A concise dictionary, Majma'ul-lughat, (4). An improved version of Kalilah wa Damnah (the Panchatantra) known as 'Iyar-i-danish, and (5). A collection of letters, Farman's and miscellaneous documents written during the course of discharging official duties: Seh daftar-i- Abul Fazl.''¹⁹

Bada'uni Mulla 'Abdul-Qadir : He was a controversial writer whose narrative gave an additional significance to Akbar's reign by painting it as a drama of fantastic events. Narrowness and rigid_orthodoxy were Bada'uni's chief traits of character, and naturally enough, his disliking for the emperor, and specially, for the enlightened circle of persons gathered around the throne, was quite genuine. The emperor, being a good judge of men, was aware of the situation and often paid the Mulla with good

humored abuses. Perhaps, he secretly admired his adversary, for, in spite of many heated disputes over delicate issues of faith, the Mulla, to his own disgust, was always retained in the position which had brought him close to the emperor. Formally, he was one of the seven Imam, leading prayers during the seven days of the week, his day was Wednesday. Bada'uni demonstrated his real worth when the emperor inaugurated his grand scheme of translations and desired to see the knowledge of Hindu Philosophy and religion transferred into Persian. He was a quick-witted and efficient writer and contributed to the renderings of (1) the book of anecdotes, singhasan-battisi as Namah-i-Khirad afza, (2) the Mahabharat as Razm-namah, of which Naqib Khan was the chief translator, and (3) the Ramayan as Tarjumah-i-kitab-i-Ramayan, (4) Also, he contributed a chapter to the Tarikh-i-alfi, (5) Wrote an ethical tract, Najat ar-Rashid, and (6) prepared a recession in simple and abridged form, of the Tarjumah-i-Tarikh-i-Kashmir, made from the original Sanskrit, Raj Tarangini. Similarly he exercised his pen in translating and epitomizing some of the Arabic and Persian works in which Akbar was interested, (7) Bada'uni's imperishable reputation is based on his work of history. In its second volume he recorded, secretly of course, the contemporary developments witnessed by him at the court of Akbar. Briefly, his assessment of the emperor was that of a simple fool misguided by clever rogues, the third volume, dealing with learned men of various branches including the Sufis and poets, is sprinkled with spicy remarks of sarcasm, irony and scandal, for Bada'uni is bitter in his heart against most of his contemporaries. Its title was Muntakhab ut-Tawarikh, completed in 1004/1595.

Tan Sen, Miyan, Mirza : He was master musician of Akbar's reign. Shaikh Abul Fazl remarked about him. Such a genius comes into the world after one thousand years. Originally a Hindu, he came under the influence of the Saint of his city,

Muhammad Ghaus Shattari of Gwalior, and embraced Islam. From the court of Rajah Ram Singh Baghela, Rewa, where he started his career, he went to Agra at Akbar's invitation and the emperor conferred on him the titles mentioned above. He dedicated notes on music, which were preserved as Budh-Prakash. Muhammad Akbar Arzani, a scholar of Aurangzeb's reign, rendered into Persian as Tashrih ul-Mausiqi.

Works of Translation Bureau of Akbar's court were:

The Mahabharat: The Mahabharat was the first book to be taken up. Naqib Khan made overall supervision and distributed the chapters between various scholars, namely, Haji Sultan Thanesari, Mulla Shiri, Bada'uni and Faizi. The Brahman scholars, cooperating with them, were Sattyawani, Debi Misra, Madhusudhan Misra, Shaikh Bahawan and a few others. Naqib Khan gave coherence by adding or omitting passages and a period of one and a half year was spending by the conartel effort of the entire team to complete the translation. Shaikh Abu'l Fazl prefixed an elaborate introduction in his grand style. The emperor exhorted all the nobles to have transcribed one copy of the book.

The Bhagvadgita : The Bhagvadgita was entrusted to Faizi, who, by his original knowledge of Sanskrit, was most worthy of the job. The work, as it exists today, bears an introduction dealing with the main theories of Hindu religion. It is one of the most widely read of all the translated books and its copies would be still found in most of the homes where Persian was studied upto a few generations back. Taking account of the immense popularity of the Persian version of Gita, apart from the spirit of the book itself, credit must be allowed to the genius of the translator.

The Ramayan : The Ramayan, was allotted to the historian Batavni, who completed the translation after four years of hard labour. The emperor, as the historian says, had

summoned “Wise Indians” from all the parts of the realm to explain the texts. It came out as Turjumah-i-kitab-i-Ramayan.

The Lilavati : The Lilavati, a treatise on mathematics and astronomy interspersed with calculations of astrological nature appeared in Persian version through the labours of Faizi. In the preface he says that a certain learned man named Bhaskar Acharya lived in the city of Bider, the Deccan. The birth of a daughter plunged the wise man in grief as her horoscope did not foretell of fruitful marriage. However, the living father was determined to immortalize the name of his daughter. The labour of love succeeded and he left Lilavati for all ages. Faizi’s version introduced Lilavati to the Persian speaking world.’’²⁰

The Nal-Daman : The Nal-Daman was a common tale of love made current by rustic bards; but the genius of a poet like Faizi embellished it into a remarkable piece of Indo-Persian literature. In the beginning of the poem he records a conversation that took place between him and his royal patron. The emperor was critical of literary taste and complained. How long you poets will regale your audience with the praise of Laila-Majnun and Khusraw-Shirin? Was there no love at all in this land of old memories?’’ Faizi mentioned the tale of Rajah Nal and Damanti. Thereupon the emperor eagerly said: “My dear poet, sing it to me, “Faizi carried out the command of the sovereign in a manner worthy of him.’’²¹

The ‘Ayar-i-Danish’: The ‘Ayar-i-Danish, i.e. the famous Pancharatna was tried to be given a fresh version by the pen of Abu’l Fazl. Already before him it was thrice rendered into Persian prose and once in verse by the earliest poet Rudaki. The author of Akbar Namah makes great effort to change his diction for a simpler and easier

expression and almost fails to produce a work as popular as Kalita or as pleasing as Anwar-i-Suhaili. The book once appeared in print.’’²²

Persian poets of Akbar’s courts were:

Persian reign witnessed a brilliant age in the history of Indo-Persian literature. Though technically illiterate, Akbar possessed a scholarly taste and his enthusiastic patronage attracted to his court the best talents not only from every corner of India, but also from every part of Iran. This was especially so in the field of poetry. Badayuni gives brief accounts of the lives and samples of poetical compositions of one hundred and sixty eight poets who lived at the empirical court or flourished in the different parts of the empire, while Abul Fazl enumerates fifty nine poets, both native and foreigner, who enjoyed Akbar’s patronage. The contemporary Safawid rulers were not even half as generous as Akbar to men of letters and poets. One will, therefore, look in vain for a poet of the caliber of urfi and Faizi at the Persian court.

Famous Persian poets of Akbar’s court were →

Ghazali Mashhadi : Ghazali Mashhadi was poet laureate at the court of Akbar and left his name among the masters whose genius elevated the dignity and importance of Persian ghazal. He had initially come to the Deccan, but his poetic talents were not properly recognized there. So he was called from the Deccan to Jaunpur by Khan-i-Zaman who was the imperial governor there. Kha-i-Zaman had sent him one thousand rupees for his travel expneses. At Jaunpur he was treated generally. He became a fast friend of Maulana Qasim Kahi who also adored Khan-i-Zaman court. Ghazali joined service under Emperor Akbar and was soon elevated to the title of Malik-ush-Shu’are. He died suddenly in Ahmadabad on Friday, 27 Rajab 980/3 December 1572 and was buried in Sarkhej. According to Abul Fazl “He was unrivalled in depth of

understanding and sweetness of language and was well acquainted with the noble thoughts of the Sufis.” He left behind nearly 50,000 verses. A voluminous Diwan of verses was Ghazali’s legacy to posterity. Also, he composed a masnawi Nagsh-i-badi.

Qasim-i-Kahi : (d.988/1580) He was born at Miyankal, a mountainous village near Samarqand, and passed considerable time of his life in the city of Kabul. He is more popularly referred to as Maulana Qasim Kahi. He was born near Bukhara, passed his early life in Kabul and in 1533 came to India. Here he attached himself to Khan-i-Zaman and Bahadur Khan, governor of Jaunpur and Benares. After the fall of the two brothers, he entered service under Akbar and settled at Agra, where he died in 1580. Besides being an interpreter of the Quran, a fine logician, a man of mysticism, generous in habit, a musician and a renowned conversationist with sardonic wit, he was a distinguished poet and composed verses under the pen-name Kahi. His poetry is fresh both in diction and content.

Abul Faiz Faizi : “He was the elder brother of Abul Fazl. He became the poet laureate of Akbar nearly fourteen years after the first holder of the title, Ghazali Mashhadi, had died. Faizi was a man of deep learning and erudition, very generous and a poet of high order and liberal outlook. He had the honour of having been tutor to all the three sons (i.e. Salim, Murad and Daniyal) of Akbar one after another. He sincerely believed in the policy of Sulh-i-kul; in fact he was one of the authors of universalism in faith the other two being his father, Shaikh Mubarak, and his younger brother, Abul Fazl. Faizi tried his pen in various fields:

1. Sawati’ul-Ilham, commentary of the Quran in undotted letters, revealing his innovative character and power of articulation. It raised him to the rank of celebrities, respected for religious learning.

2. The Bhagwad Gita, song of Krishna, the charming portion from the Mahabharat. Faizi's translation subscribed to the larger project of rendering the sacred books of the Hindus into Persian, which Akbar and his devoted circle of associates had undertaken to accomplish.
3. Lilawati, translation of an astronomical and mathematical treatise.
4. Diwan of verses, containing chiefly ghazals and qasidahs.
5. Nal-Dawan, a masnawi narrating the romance of two lovers born in the province of Malwah.
6. Markaz-i-adwar, a didactic masnawi on the model of Shaikh Nizami of Ganjah.
7. Lata if-i-Faizi, collection of letters.'',²³

Muhammad Jamaluddin Urfi Shirazi: Sayed Jamaluddin Muhammad widely known as Urfi was born in 1555 at Shiraz. He derived his penname from the term Urf given to the secular or non religious department in Persian. One of which his father Zainud – din Alawr, had been occupied. When Urfi came to India he reached Fatehpur Sikri, where he presented himself, Faizi who received him cordially treated him with all possible kindness and favour. For some time Urfi linked under his patronage but he could not stay there for long and soon after he was attached to Hakim Amir. Abul Fatch Gilani, the letter held high rank in the court of Akbar himself being a great scholar of oriented language, he entertained at his court as many eminent poets and writers as possible. He came to India at the beginning of his poetic career and stayed with several nobles, such as Faizi, Hakim Abdul Fath Gitani and Abdur Rahim Khan – i – Khanan. It was the Khan – i – Khanan who introduced him to Emperor Akbar. Urfi was a highly talented poet, his style and diction marked the

choicest and the finest Jewel – work of fastidious artist. His Diwan was readily available in any book shop. Unfortunately, he was not destined to live long. He died of poisoning in 1591 when he was just thirty six years of age. He was first buried in Lahore, but nearly thirty years later his remains were carried to and reinterred at Najar Sharif. According to Abul Fazl, just on the eve his death Urfi composed the following quatrain –

(Urfi! You are dying, yet you are carefree; on what account are you depending? Tomorrow, when the Friend offers paradise in return for a price (good deeds). What will you show?)

Though essentially a qasida writer, he himself declared that ghazal was first love:

(Qasida writing is the profession of the greedy. 'Urfi, you belong to the tribe of lovers, your field is, therefore, ghazal.)

It is said that urfi cherished love for the prince Salim. However he was poisoned by someone who caused his death of an early age of thirty six in 1591 A.D. He was buried in Nozat – i – Ashat where Hazarat Ali (Peace be on him) was slain nearly by chance. It is also happened that once long after his death a dervish came in Lahore and mistaking the grave of Urfi for one of his brother dug in to open and taken out the bones of Urfi and went to Nazaf – i – Ashraf where he buried those bones near the shrine of Hazarat Ali (peace be on him). Urfi had long before expressed his desire in the following lines:-

Despite dying young, Urfi had a great impaction his contemporaries through the force of both his personality and his poetry. He was hypersensitive, quick to take offense and respond to any taunt with a ready wit a sharp tongue. E.G Brown in his

book *Literary History of Persia* mentioned that “One day Urfi finds his sponsor, Faizi, holding puppy and asks the name of the “young master” when Faizi answers “Urfi”, Urfi replies, “Mobarak Basad” both offering his congratulations on the new pet and suggested that Faizi ought to name it after his father, Shekh Mobarak. Even his most sympathetic biographer, Abd-al-Baqi of Nahavand, remarks on Urfi’s open disregard for the standard protocol and etiquette of the Mughal court. Urfi Shirazi often used to declare that his poetry to be superior not only to that of his contemporaries, but also unrivalled by the greatest poets of the past, such as Khaqani, Anwari and Nizami. The author of *Tabakat-e-Akbari* suggested that this egotism of Urfi was the cause of the poet’s premature demise. Even it was found that Urfi offended many of his fellow poets. However exaggerated Urfi’s lofty estimation of his own talents, his claims were not unfounded. His poetry enjoyed great popularity in his life time through out the Persian-speaking world. E.J.W Gibb remarks on Urfi formative influence on Ottoman Turkish poetry as well. Awhadi of Balyan and Abd-al Baqi of Nahavand identify “Urfi as the “inventor of the “*taza-e-taza*”. No single poet can justly be given credit for the emergence of the “fresh” or Indian” style. Urfi played a crucial role in the move away from the colloquial diction and realist aesthetics of the maktab-e-woqu and toward a new valuation of conceptual subtlety and imagistic complexity. Among the Urfi’s works his qasidas have met with special critical acclaim. Though a few of these are addressed to Urfi’s early Safavid patrons, most date from his career in India and are dedicated to Abul Fateh of Gilan, Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khanan, Prince Salim and Akbar. Urfi also wrote a number of devotional qasidas on the Prophet Muhammad and Imam Ali, including his single longest work in this genre, entitled *Tarjomat al sawq*. Anna Livia Beelaert analyzes this poem as an example of thematic

genre of the *sowgand-nama* and a creative imitation of an earlier panegyric by Kamal al-din of Isfahan. Urfi also wrote responses to the recognized masters of the genre such as Khaqani and Anwari. Like these poets, “Urfi often makes learned allusion to such fields as logic and medicine, inspiring in India a series of commentaries on his qasidas.

Urfi’s style

As regards Urfi’s style it is admitted on all hand that he had a complete mastery over almost all kinds of Persian poetry. He always exceeded all over poets of his time, whenever he entered the list of poetry writing of all one various kinds of poetry Urfi was deficient in writing Masnavi.

It was qasida and ghazal that won him such worldwide reputation. He introduced new and original construction and style by his qasidas in a Persian poetry which never been used by his predecessors, contributed very much towards the establishment of Persian language and literature. His style in the qasida has been praised for its measured, yet fluent diction, continuity of theme over extended passages, the coinage of new metaphorical compounds, and innovative comparisons. His mastery of the qasida has perhaps unjustly overshadowed his ghazals, which at their best demonstrate a powerful command of language and subtlety of thought and imagery. Urfi’s real strength, however, is in his handling of philosophical and gnostic themes. His Diwan also contains a few tarkib and tarjibands and several dozen qetas mostly on courtly themes as well as a couple of hundred rubai’s.

Urfi began work on a khamsa on the model of Nezami, but he died before bringing even one of the five projected masnavis to completion. He finished a little over 1400 verses of Majma-ul Akbar, which consists of ethical and dadicate tales in a

Sufi mode. Only four hundred verses of the introductory section of his *Farhad-o-Sirin* survive. Besides scattered rhymed couplets, Urfi did complete short *saqi nama*, a genre much in vogue at the time. Urfi's interest in Sufism is again apparent in his short prose work entitled *Resala-i-nafsiya*. Finally, samples of his personal correspondence and other prose jotting have been gleaned from manuscript miscellanies and some copies of his *Diwan*.

Jahangir (1605-1627 AD)

“It has rightly been observed that Jahangir was the child of many prayers. Akbar wanted an heir to succeed him and he not only prayed to God, but also begged of the blessings of saints to have such a son. He waited on Christ at Ajmer for the same purpose. Ultimately, a son was born in August, 1569, and he was named Muhammad Salim. Akbar used to call him Shaikh Baba. As the child was got after many efforts, Akbar left no stone unturned to make him as much accomplished as he could be. He started his studies at the age of four and many capable tutors were employed to teach him Persian, Arabic, Turki, Hindi, Arithmetic, History, Geography and other sciences. The most important tutor was Abdur Rahim Khan-i- Khana who was a versatile genius.”²⁴

“During the period of Jahangir the Mughal empire reached its zenith. After the death of Akbar his son, Jahangir, ascended the throne. He ruled from 1605 to 1627 A.D. Due to his liberal education and natural intelligence, he continued the statement like policy of his father. From 1611 A.D, however he fell under the overpowering influence of his wife Nur Jahan, who became the virtual sovereign. It was due to her influence that Shah Jahan revolted against his father.”²⁵

Art and literature flourished in the same fashion throughout this period as they had captivated popular attention during half a century in the past. The enrichment of intellectual life due to the influx of foreign talents, mostly from Iran, continued without decreasing. In real spirit, the literary traditions of former days survived intact. As such ghazal reserved the privilege of determining poetic genius. Naziri Nishapuri continued to enjoy the reputation of most outstanding poet during Jahangir's period. The emperor invited him for a personal meeting and honoured with cash reward. Similarly, Jahangir did not forget to mention his poet-laureate, Talib-i-Amuli. These two entries in the Tuzuk reflected the general taste of the educated classes. Jahangir laid down a unique custom in history. He ordered the poets and masters of other disciplines to be weighed in Silver. Hayati Gilani stood first in the reckoning.

Some great prose writers of Jahangir's Court were---

“Jahangir, Nur ud-Din Emperor: He ascended the throne of his father, Akbar at the age of thirty eight years. Notwithstanding enormities of personal and political nature, the Mughals of India carried literature in their veins and had a craze for all sorts of artistic pursuits. From Babur to Bahadur Shah Zafar the immense Charcha made to different to the rule. Among them Jahangir was a writer of fluent and attractive prose. He wrote his memoirs from accession (1014/1605) to the seventeenth year of his reign. Afterwards, ill health due to overdrinking prevented him from further exercise of his own pen. He then entrusted the work to his private Secretary, Mu'tamad Khan, and supervised the writing for one more year. These yearly records made up the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri. Between the account of political and administrative events there are frequent digressions, showing the emperor's keen interest in beautiful things of nature, particularly, animals and flowers the other topic on which remarks

came out reading from his pen, were poetry and painting. In revealing his entire personality, Jahangir maintained a reserve and dignity becoming of his royal position. None the less, he had a pleasant expression and did not allow dry or wearisome remarks to creep into his Tuzuk, like a gifted writer, he exercised surprising economy of words in arranging the crowded facts. There is no ostentation and the description flows in natural and easy manner. Graceful communication must be acknowledged as the chief merit of Tuzuk-i- Jahangir.”²⁶

Husain Qari, Mulla : He lived in Kashmir and was an earlier author of the history of his native land. Haider Malik Ra’isul Mulla and Khwajah Muhammad Azam, the two scholars who wrote after him, mentioned Mulla Husain Qari’s name and borrowed material from his work. Its double title seemed to be Tarikh-i-Kashmir/ Waqi’at-i-Kashmir, coming down to Ca.1024/1615. P-317

“Ni’mat Ullah : He was the son of Khwajah Habib Ullah of Heart, who served in the government of Akbar. Initially, he started his career as librarian of ‘Abd ur-Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, and then found employment as news writer under Jahangir. Having been dismissed from the above named post on charges of misconduct, he was offered patronage by Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, the important Afghan noble during the reign of Jahangir. Later on, Khan-i-Jahan’s revolt against Shah Jahan ended in his defeat and death. Ni’mat Ullah remained in Khan-i-Jahan’s service till the end of his life, and as a token of his gratitude, wrote a comprehensive history of Afghan rule in India, naming it Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani, Ca. 1021/1621. An abridgment of the same prepared by him was Makhzan-i-Afghani.”²⁷

Salman Qazwini : He lived in the reign of Jahangir and was the author of a general history, narrating the events to the time of his patron, its title was Jawahir ut-Tawrikh, completed in 1037/1627.

Muhammad Tanburah : He was a guitar player, poet, painter and story-teller, who arrived from Iran in the reign of Jahangir. Particularly, he acquired fame as reciter of the Shah-Namah, Firdowsi's great classic, which was a highly specialized and appealing art possess all the merits of stage-play. The combination of so many qualities in a single character sufficiently proved his genius. A true artist having merged his existence in guitar, hence 'Tanburah' he exhibited total disregard for dress and manners. On the other hand, Mughal society being extremely polished, no breach of public etiquette could be imagined. One day, Tanburah appeared before Khwajah wai's Hamdani a nobleman, in its Vagabond style and the Khwajah, deeply offended, slapped him out of the assembly. The artist avenged the insult by composing a satire against his enemy. It has survived in Mughal literature. Finally, Jahangir, enlisted Tanburah among his court painters.

“Jahangir inherited the rich cultural traditions from his imperial and illustrious father and allowed them to make further progress under his warm patronage. He was an accomplished poet in his own right and has left several verses which bear witness to his poetic merit.”²⁸

Some important poets of Jahangir's Court were---

“Mirza Ghazi Beg Tar Khan:(d.1609) He was the son of Mirza Jani Beg Tar Khan. On the death of his father's in 1601, he was made to succeed him to the government of Thatta. Jahangir, on his accession, granted him the high rank of 7,000 and sent him to govern Qandahar, where he died in 1609 when barely twenty-five years of age. He was a keen patron of letters and himself composed poetry, his pen-name being

Waqari. It is said that there was a poet in Qandahar who bore this poetic name, and that the Mirza bought this title from him by giving him rupees ten thousand in cash, a robe of honour and a horse. He was also unequalled as a singer and player on the tam bourine. For sometime such literary giants and poets as Mulla Murshid Yazdjardi, Talib Amuli, Mir Nimatullah asili and Mulla asd, the story teller, were associated with him.”²⁹

“Nur Jahan Begum, Mehr un Nisa : She was the daughter of Mirza Ghiyas Beg I’timad ud-Dawlah and sister of Abul Nasan Asraf Khan, the prime Ministers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan respectively. Initially, her wedding took place with Sher Afghan Khan, an Iranian noble of ordinary rank posted in Bengal. By deliberate mischief or mere accident, young Sher Afghan was slain in a violent scuffle with the provincial governor (1016/1607). Fortune smiled on the young widow. For, in less than four years, she entered Jahangir’s harem as chief Queen and took in her hands the control of the empire. Coins were struck in her name and imperial firmans bore her signature. As regards her last days, popular memory has preserved a strikingly romantic episode that depicted her true character, of course. From her retreat in Lahore, she wrote to her ruling step-son Shah Jahan, expressing that last wish: a place for the grave. The shadow of her husband’s tomb should ever fall on it. It will be a memorial to posterity of a woman’s selfless devotion. Possessing creative imagination and cultivated taste, Nur Jahan Begum, through her stray verses, left a claim upon the writers of anthologies to include her name in their accounts.

Naziri, Muhammad Husain : He belonged to Nishapur and arrived in the reign of Akbar. Poetry being most popular art of age, his contemporaries soon acknowledged Naziri’s exceptional merits. He chose Ahmadabad, Gujrat. For his residence,

although, to attend the company of his patron, Khan-i-Khanan, whose military headquarters shifted from place to place, he stayed at many other cities of the empire. Once, Jahangir's invitation brought him to the Imperial Capital, and as recorded in the Tuzuk, the Emperor was very much pleased with the poet. Persian ghazal had the capacity to accept further refinement of expression and that was subscribed by Naziri. His Diwan ever remained popular in the sub-continent.”³⁰

Talib-i-Amuli :He was poet-laureate at the court of Jahangir. He emigrated from Amul, a small town in the South of Caspian Sea, and soon established his position as literary genius of the age. Among his patrons was the lord chancellor of the empire Mirza Ghiyas Beg Itimad ud-Dawah. In his Tuzuk, Jahangir recorded the conferring of the title of laureateship on Talib and noted a few verses of the poet, which pleased the emperor's taste. Time has not been able to shake the reputation enjoyed by Talib among the galaxy of literary men, whose presence made the period of Akbar and Jahangir 'the spring season of Persian poetry in India: He left Diwan of verses and a few masnawi poems.”³¹

Works during the regime of Shah Jahan: (1627-1658 A.D):

Shah Jahan was one of the most glorious Emperors of Mughal dynasty. It was during his reign that empire touched prosperity and as such his reign is known as golden period of Indian history. During his long reign the empire however, witnessed many important events and as such reign was eventful. Shah Jahan was the third son of Emperor Jahangir. He was born at Lahore in 1592 to a Rajput princess. Jagat Gosain or Jodhabai, daughter of Raja Udai Singh of Marwar. Great festivities were held at his birth and the prince was christened Khwram or "the joyous". In his childhood, he was a great favorite of his grandfather, Akbar. Early education of

Khawram was well looked after by Akbar and soon the prince acquired sufficient knowledge of Persian language and learnt history, politics, geography, theology and medicine.

‘Shah Jahan gave protection to scholars. Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi and other literatures developed during his reign. Shah Jahan himself being a learned man, the Emperor took a very keen interest in the study of history and lives a great men. Shah Jahan had some great scholars at his court like Qazwami, Abdul Hamid Lahori, Mir Abdul Qasim Irani, Mirza Zia-ud-din, Sheikh Bahlol Qadri, Sheikh, Mir Lahori and others. Besides these Muslim scholars who did a lot for the development of Persian literature, there were many Hindu scholars like Sundar Dass, Chitamani, Kavindra Acharya and Jagan Nath. They did a lot for the development of Hindi literature. Jagan Nath was so great poet that he had earned the title of ‘Mahakavi Rai.’’³²

Some prose writers of Shah Jahan’s Court were:-

“Abdul-Hamid Lahori : He was a scholar during the reign of Shah Jahan. The emperor employed him to write an official chronicle on the pattern of Shaikh Abul Fazl’s Akbar-namah. In his account he covered twenty years of Shah Jahan’s period of glory and splendor, after which, prevented by old age, he entrusted the job to his pupil, Muhammad Waris. The learned prime Minister, Sa’d ullah Khan, personally revised the author’s Padshah-namah.’’³³

Amina-i-Qazwari, Mirza Muhammad Amin: He was a poet and writer of Shah Jahan’s reign, who engaged Amina as his official chronicler. He depicted the first ten years of his master’s reign on annalistic namah, 1047/1637.

Baha ul-Haq Qadiri : He was the author of a biography of Shaikh ‘Abd ul-Qadir Jilani (d. 651/1166), written as a handbook for general instruction of the sufis , who followed his order. It was entitled Anis ul-Qadiriyyah (ca. 1052/1642.) ’’³⁴

Jahan Ara Begum : She was the eldest daughter of Shah Jahan and like her brother, Dara Shikoh, she was deep and sincere interest in the teachings of Sufism. Both were the disciples of Mulla Shah Muhammad Badakhshi of Kashmir, a leading Saint of the age. She served her father with selfless devotion during his years of captivity in Agra fort. After Shah Jahan’s death, she moved to Delhi and passed the rest of her life in the pious routine of prayers and study of books as she possessed reading habits. She had selected a place for her grave close to the tomb of Sheikh Nizam ud-Din -Asuliya and was accordingly buried there. Her contributions as a writer were two concise books very much admired by the sufis.

1. Discourses of her spiritual guide, Mulla Shah Muhammad Badakhshi, Sahibiyah, and 2. A tazkirah devoted to the lives of Chisti Saints: Munis ul- Arawah.

Jagat Rai Shuja’I Munshi: He served as revenue officer in the government of Shah Jahan and was posted at Jahangir Nagar, Dacca, Bengal. He was the author of an administrative manual giving details about revenue rules and other regulations operating, in particular, at lower, that is Sarkar and Parganah levels. Its title was Farhang-i-Kardani, completed in 1102/1690.

Inayat ullah Kanbo, Shaikh : He was elder brother of the historian of shah Jahan, Muhammad Salih, Kanbo and served in earlier life as a high dignitary of imperial secretariat. Attracted by the discipline of Sufism, Sheikh Inayat ullah renounced the world and settled as hermit near the shrine of Khwajah Bakhtiyar Kaki at Delhi, where he lived till advanced age. Trained in literary scholarship and possessed with

the experience of professional secretary he proved himself a successful writer and left many books: 1. Tarikh-i-dil Kusha, a history of the reign of Shah Jahan covering brief survey of the achievements made by the emperor's ancestors, 2. A book on the model of Iyar-i- Danish containing talks tales, which he claimed to have translated from original Sanskrit source: Bahar-i-Danish, and 3. A continuation of Akbar-namh, narrating events of the last four years of Akbar's reign, Takmilah-i-Akbar namah. His younger brother collected his letters, Gulshan-i-Inayat.'',³⁵

Dara Shikoh Muhammad : He was the eldest son of shah Jahan. The emperor chose him to be heir apparent and bestowed on him positions of great distinction to signify his intentions. One of the characteristics of the Turkish race, Indian Mughals not excepting, was their total disregard for the law of primogeniture in their monarchic system. Invariably, the question of succession was decided by brute force, and in given circumstances, only the most energetic and craft prince ascended the throne after destroying all the real or possible claimants, that is, brother, nephews, half brother, and for safety's sake every male member of the royal house. Unluckily, Shah Jahan's temporary illness created a similar situation among his four sons: Dara Shikoh, Muhammad Suja, Aurangzeb, and Murad Bukhish. A series of disastrous battles brought the empire of the verge of collapse and the loss of precious human blood was incalculable. When Shah Jahan rose from his sick bed, he found of his dismay that the hidden hand of fate had turned the page of India's history. Aurangzeb was master of the stage and all the other minor and major members of the family had passed out of scene. The grief stricken father reconciled himself to the humiliating existence of a prisoner and remained alive for seven and a half years. In their mental attitude, Dara Shikoh and his sister, Jahan Ara Begum, chose for themselves a field

which no other member of their family had tried to investigate before them. Without exception, all Timurid princes had been lovers of art and culture, but Sufism could not claim their attention as the primary conditions of that discipline were self-imposed poverty and resignation from the world. Significantly, both the brother and sister the world, significantly, both the brother and sister passed through regular course of initiation under the discipleship of Mulla Shah Badakhshi and formally entered the Qadiri order. The prince devoted all his life to the task of reading and writing about Sufism as it existed in Islam and in other religions, particularly amongst the Hindus. His acquaintance with Sanskrit enabled him to translate into Persian the classic of Hindu philosophy the Upanishad. Also, he studied and prepared commentaries on portions of the Vedas, the translation of which had been left incomplete since the time of his great grandfather. As pointed out by Albert Schweitzer in his Indian Thought, the philosophy of India entered Europe thanks to the genius of Dara Shikoh. For the first time, it was his Oupnek' hat in its Persian version, re-translated into French, which awakened the western intellectuals to the richness and relevance of Indian wisdom. Dara Shikoh left from his pen : 1. Akbar, above named translation, 2. Majma'ul Bahrain comparative study of major sufistic system, 3. Hasanat ul-Arifin, virtues of the saints, 4. Risalah-i-Haq-nama, discourses on spiritual improvement, 5. Sakinat ul-Auliya, and 6. Safinat ul-Auliya, devoted to the lives of the saints, completed ca. 1049/1640.’’³⁶

Some important poets of Shah-Jahan's court were :

Kalim Hamadani : He was poet laureate at the court of Shah Jahan. Earlier, he had visited India during the time of Jahangir and also, stayed for sometime in the capital of Bijapur under the patronage of Ibrahim Adil Shah and his prime minister, Shah

Nawaz Khan Shirazi. Kalim earned his reputation for contributing to the development of the peculiar style of Ghazal, called by the Iranian critics as Sabk-i-Hindi. Scholars in Iran traditionally held it as one of the three styles of their poetry, the other two being Sabk-i-Iraqi and Sabk-i-Khurasani in order of time. The Sabk-i-Hindi was distinguished by its philosophical depth, difficult allusions and artificial expressions. The geographical identification, said the Iranian critics, was a mere convenience, it did not necessary demarcate between the poets of the three races. In more recent estimate the Sabk-i-Hindi has come to be denigrated as a sign of decadence and lack of taste. Its name, reminding the Indian Connection, was bound to cast reflection, rightly or wrongly, on the vast literature produced in the subcontinent and has not failed to create embarrassment. In his last days Kalim was allowed by Shah Jahan to stay in Kashmir, where his object was to prepare the versified chronicle of his master's reign. Only about fifteen thousand verses, covering the the early ten years, had been complete before the poet was overtaken by death, its proposed title was padshah-namah.

Sa'ida-i-Gilani, Be-badal Khan : He lived as a poet at the court of Jahangir and attained greater fame under Shah Jahan. The latter trusted him for his integrity and made him custodian of the imperial jewels. His poems revealed the chronology of important ceremonies held at the court of Shah Jahan. The significant achievement of his career was the peacock Throne, which he supervised for seven years till its completion. He was twice rewarded for his poems with his body-weight of silver. He had mastery in composing chronograms.

Haji Muhammad Qudsi : He belonged to Mushhad, Iran and lived at the court of Shah Jahan and was a man of deep learning and pious demeanour. He left his name in

the lucky list of writers. In composing poetry on different themes he showed his unique genius and was universally applauded. Poetry was in fact his bondsmaid. In 1631 he came to the Mughal court and was warmly received. Shah Jahan several times rewarded him handsomely for his odes. He died in Agra in 1646.

Muhammad ‘Ali Sa’ib : He was the son of one Mirza ‘Abdur Rahim and was born in Tabriz in 988/1580. He became a man of learning and poet of very high order. When he started turning out verses, he chose Sa’ib as his pen-name. He came to India towards the closing month of Emperor Jahangir’s reign in 1626 and lived for six years at Shah Jahan’s court (1626-32) and then went back to Iran, his native land. He carried happy memories of his stay in India and remained in constant touch with Indian poets and exchanged with them poetic pieces. He died in 1671 in Isfahan and lies buried there. Sai’b was a poet of wide outlook. He preached that one’s religion should not make one ridiculous or belittle other people’s faith and religions. His poetry is extraordinarily rich in allusions and allegories and deeply tingled with ethics and mysticism in fact, in the light of his poetic pieces. One may safely conclude that he may not have worn the patched garments of the mystics but in his dealings with his fellow-begins he behaved like a Sufi. His philosophy of life, as reflected in his poetry, seems to have been: Love all, hate none, help all, harm none, respect all, and look down upon none.

Makhfi Rashti: He was a poet during the reign of Shah Jahan. His home town was Kasht, Northern Iran. Earlier he stayed in the court of Iran Quli Khan, governor of the Southern province of Fars under the Safawids. His Diwan of verses partially at least, seemed to have been mixed up with that of Zeb-un-Nisa, Aurangzeb’s daughter, as the princess also composed under the pen-name Makhfi and collected her Diwan.’’³⁷

Authors in the court of Aurangzeb (1658-1707 A.D)

Aurangzeb had received the best education as a prince and wrote elegant Persian prose.’’³⁸ Aurangzeb was born on 24th October, 1618 at Dohad near Ujjain. He was from Mumtaz Mahal, the lady of the Taj. Due to the revolt of Shah Jahan the child along with his brother Dara, was sent in 1626 as a hostage to Lahore by Shah Jahan. Soon afterwards he was released and arrangement was made for his education. Mir Mohammad Hashim was his well-known teacher. Soon the prince acquired mastery over the Quran and hadis and became a great scholar of Arabic and Persian. He also acquired training in fighting. At the age of 15, he showed wonderful courage and bravery by attacking and wounding an infuriated elephant.

His own reign (1658-1707) covers the second half of the seventeenth century and stands forth as a most important epoch in the annals of our country. Under him the Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent and the largest single state ever known in India from the dawn of history to the rise of the British power was formed. From Ghazni to Chittagong, from Kashmir to the Karnatak, the continent of India obeyed one scepter. Islam made its last onward movement in India in the reign. The Empire thus formed, while unprecedented in Size, was also one political unit. Its provinces were governed not by the mediation of Sub-Kings, but directly by servants of the Crown. Herein Aurangzeb’s Indian Empire was vaster than that of Asoka or Samudragupta or Harshavardhan. The life of Aurangzeb was one long tragedy, the story of a man battling in vain against an invisible but inexorable fate and this tragedy in history was developed with all the regularity of a perfect drama. After having settled with his brothers, Aurangzeb ascended the throne in July 1658. However, the formal accession, Aurangzeb assumed the title of Alamgir. In 1661, he received

ambassadors from Persia and Bokhara who were sent to congratulate him on his succession. As all the possible rivals had already been disposed of Aurangzeb enjoyed comparative peace.

The historical battle of Samugarh ended on 8 June, 1658. Aurangzeb seized the fort of Agra. After the capture of Agra, the imprisonment of his father in that fort and disposing of the claims of Murad Baksh for sovereignty, Aurangzeb went through a hurried ceremony of accession at Delhi on 31 July, 1658 assuming the title of 'Abul Muzaffar Muhi-ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur Alamgir Padshah Ghazi.' Then he pursued Dara and defeated him in the battle of Deorai near Ajmer. After settling his score with Shuja in the battle of Khajuraho the emperor entered Delhi in a grand procession on May, 1659. Then on 15 May, 1659 his coronation ceremony was held again with great pomp and splendour. The emperor took his seat on the Peacock throne at Shah Jahan's grand palace. Thus Aurangzeb the third son of Shah Jahan, started his imperial career after winning four wars of succession against his own brothers and ruled India for about fifty years at a stretch.

He was the sixth of the fourteen children of Shah Jahan. The early period of his life was quite turbulent. While he was still only eight years old he was sent by Shah Jahan, along with Dara, as hostage to Jahangir. It was only after the death of Jahangir and accession of Shah Jahan that Aurangzeb was set free and arrangements for his proper education were made. He received his education under Mir Muhammad Hashim of Gilam, and soon familiarized himself with the Quran and the Hadis. Aurangzeb also received training in fighting and developed the qualities of bravery. It is said that at the age of 15 he showed wonderful bravery by attacking and wounding

an infuriated elephant which greatly evoked the admiration of Shah Jahan as well as others present there.

Aurangzeb was a great scholar in Muslim scriptures. He wrote a book Futuhat-i-Alamgir in which he compiled all Muslim laws. He was a devout Muslim. He used to do Nawaz five times a day and fasted the Ramzan month. Even in the battle field of Balkh and Badakshan in Central Asia he read Nawaz disregarding attacks of enemy soldiers. According to Percival spear Aurangzeb was a devoted Sunni when he was in North India. But after 1681 when he went to the South India he lived like a Fakir or religious saint. For this, people would call him a living saint or 'Zinda Pir.' During his regime Islamic Philosophy and religion was studied with great enthusiasm in places like Delhi, Thatta, Sindh and Jaunpur.

From the time of 'Alamgir, the demarcation of literary men into three categories was almost visible: (1). Direct emigrants from Iran and Central Asia, (2). Their second or third generation residing in the Sub-Continent and (3). Men of purely India origin. None the less, in command of expression and refinement of ideas the distinction could hardly be made. The Hindustani writers handled the language gracefully and the share of their contribution was equally rich.

Some prose writers of Aurangzeb's court were:-

Alamgir Aurangzeb Muhya ud-Din : ' As prince, he had received the best education and imbibed five taste for scholarship and literature. After ascending the throne, he took steps which confounded his contemporaries as well as later historians. Nonetheless, he enjoyed the company of men distinguished for their learning and culture; some of his favourite courtiers were brilliant wits of the age. Overwhelmingly busy with the affairs of state, he could still find time to write letters, which by their

freshness and charm of style, confirmed his position among the masters of Indo-Persian prose. Their admiring reader will hardly discern in his character the ruthless despot or harsh bigot, for emerging from the pages in between the lines he will find the image of a polished and amicable sovereign. The collection of these letters, initially brought out by more than one editor under different titles, has the familiar name : Ruqqa ‘at-Alamgir.

Abdul-Khaliq b. ‘Ata Ullah : He came from Heart and served the Mughal government during time of Aurangzeb. A scholar by training, he was aware of the emperor’s religious temperament. He wrote a book in three sections with further subdivisions containing miscellaneous subjects in which devotees of religion were chiefly interested. In the first two sections, he accommodated biographies of the prophet, his caliphs, companions, the twelve Imams, and a large number of saints. Then, there were topics relevant to the Sufis : prayers and pious practices, essential for spiritual purification. The work was dedicated to the emperor and appeared under the title : Majmu’ah-i-‘Alamgir.

Abd Ullah Chalbi : He came from ottoman Turkey in the reign of Aurangzeb. The emperor employed him in his favourit project, the compilation of legal decrees. The team of scholars who compiled the legal decrees in original Arabic were Mir Miran Abul Farah, Mulla Jamil of Jaunpur, Shaikh Muhammad Hasan of Jaunpur, Qazi Inayat Ullah of Monghyr, Shaikh Wajih un-Din of Gopamao, ‘Abul Khair Thattawi, Shaikh ‘Abd ur-Rahim and many others. As desired by the emperor, another team was constituted to make simultaneous translation of the decrees into Persian under Abd Ullah Chalbi. It seemed that ‘Abd ullah Chalbi’s Persian version of *Fatawa-i-‘Alamgiri* ramined incomplete.’’³⁹

Ahmad Quli Safari :- “He was Waqa’i-nawis-news reporter of Bengal during the time of Shah Alam Bahadur Shah. He attempted a historical work, specially casting light on the times of Aurangzeb, and named it Tarikh-i-‘Alamgiri.

Bhag Chand Munshi : He was a civil servant of Mughal government during the reign of Aurangzeb and prepared a collection of historical letters. The volume contained letters from (1) Humayun to Shah Tahmasp Safawi of Iran, (2) Shah Tahmasp to his provincial governor and noble, Muhammad Khan, posted at Heart, (3) Akbar to the Ottoman Sultan of Turkey, ‘Abd ullah Khan Uzbek of Bukhara, and the Khans of Trans Oxiana, (4) Shah Abbas the Great to Akbar and the Ottoman Sultan, (5) Jahangir to Shuja Ahmad, King of Kashghar, (6) Shah Jahan to the safawid monarchs of Iran, kings of Bijapur and Golcon Da, Nazr Muhammad and other rulers of Trans-Oxiana, (7) Aurangzeb to Shah Jahan, his brothers, nobles of the empire and (8) Jahan Ara Begum to Aurangzeb B hag Chand’s collection appeared under the title : Majma ‘ul-Insha.’’⁴⁰

Mujtaba b. Mustafa : He belonged to Laharpur, a town in District Sitapur, North India and had reputation of a sufi scholar during the time of Aurangzeb. He was the author of a treatise dealing with ethical and spiritual teachings: Anis ul- Ashiqin.

Poets of Aurangzeb’s Court were:---

Ahsan ullah Lahori, Hafiz : He was teacher in a madrasah at Lahore and compiled a text-book that was included in the syllabus of education. It contained selections from the verses of classical poets and its title was: Miftah ul-Afwah, completed in 1106/1694.

Alawi, Muhammad Tahir Hussain : ‘He came from Kashan, Iran in the reign of Aurangzeb, and settled in Kashmir. As a poet, he treated Jalal Asir as his literary

guide and imitated his style. He left a Diwan and the Masnawi poem: Haddad wa Hallaj.

Bayani: He belonged to the Deccan and lived during the days of Aurangzeb. He picked up an old and popular tale of two legendary lovers: Mahyer and Chanderbadan, and rendered it into Persian. Oddly enough, the poet used two metres. Hazaj and Mutaqarib, in that Masnawi. It appeared as: Ishq-namah, 1105/1693.

Fana'I Kashmiri: He lived as a poet in the reign of Aurangzeb and was the disciple of a Sufi, Shaikh Luqman b. Shaikh Usman. He composed a masnawi in praise of prophets and kings. Then work contained the account of his spiritual guide, Shaikh Luqman, and praise of the emperor, Aurangzeb. Its title was: Jahan- namah. ”⁴¹

BACK NOTE:

1. Hadi, Navi, *History of Indo-Iranian Literature*. P-1
2. *Ibid*, P-235
3. *Ibid*, Pp-236-237
4. *Ibid*, P-238
5. *Ibid*, Pp-239-240
6. *Ibid*, P-252
7. V.D. Mahajan, *History of Medieval India*. p-20
8. Four Authors, *A Simple History of Medieval India*. p-205
9. *Ibid*, p-213
10. Hadi, Navi. *Op.cit*, P-240-241
11. *Ibid*, p-241-244
12. Qamaruddin, Dr. P-14-15
13. Hadi, Navi. *Op. cit*. P-255-256
14. Qamaruddin, Dr.*op. cit*. P-19-22
15. Mahajan, V.D. P-64
16. Hadi, Navi. *Op. cit*. P-259
17. *Ibid*, P-266-267
18. *Ibid*, P-267-268
19. *Ibid*, p-269-270
20. *Ibid*, p-275-280
21. Asif, Dr. Mazhar, *Adabiyat-i-Classic-o-Jadeed (Hissa-i-Nasor)*, pp-65-66
22. Hadi, Navi. *Op.cit*, Pp-292-294
23. *Ibid*, P-296-298

24. *V.D. Mahajan, p-125*
25. *Four Authors, p-129*
26. *Ibid, p-315*
27. *Ibid, p-334*
28. *Qamaruddin, Dr. Op.cit, p-94*
29. *Ibid, p-100*
30. *Hadi, Navi. Op.cit, P-374*
31. *Ibid, p-374*
32. *Prasad, L. A Simple History of Medieval India. p-7*
33. *Hadi, Navi. Op. cit. P-344*
34. *Ibid, pp-345-350*
35. *Ibid, pp-354*
36. *Ibid, pp-372-73*
37. *Ibid, pp-392-402*
38. *Qamaruddin, Dr. O.cit, p-144*
39. *Hadi, Navi. Op.cit, Pp-409-410*
40. *Ibid, pp-413-418*
41. *Ibid, pp-459-462*

CHAPTER – III

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSIAN POETRY IN INDIA

DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Babur founded his dynasty in India and left in infant kingdom for his son Humayun. Humayun lost his inheritance to Sher Shah, but regained it from his grandson. Akbar inherited from his father a kingdom in name only, but in due course turned it into a mighty Empire. His successors, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, each expanded it until the whole country came under their effective rule.

The great Mughals guaranteed stability and peace within their Empire, which resulted in an all-round prosperity and created a suitable environment in the country for cultural progress in all its manifestations. During the Mughal rule poetry, both Persian and Hindi, was a favourite intellectual pursuit and there was hardly any man of note who did not cultivate this art to a greater or lesser degree. The main genres of Persian poetry consist of ghazal, rub'ī, masnawī, qasida and qit'a.

Emperor Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was not only a great commander and conqueror, but also a man of refined literary taste and master of a pure and unaffected style alike in prose and poetry. He was a born poet and wrote verses both in Turki and Persian. The only person who surpassed him in turning out more beautiful poetry in Turki was 'Alī Sher Nawā'ī, the prime minister and friend of Sultan Husain Baiqar of Herat.¹

Some important poets of Babur's court were-

Atishi Qandhari: He arrived in the company of Babur and fought at Panipat. After the battle was over, he approached his master and reminded him of the promise to

return. Babur summoned his commanders and delivered a short speech. He announced his interior to stay; but allowed them full liberty to go back. Let everybody decide for himself. Atishi spurred his horse and took road to Kabul. Unluckily, he could not reach his destination and died in Lahore. He was a poet and composed tolerable verses.

Shihab Mu'amma'I : Shihab Mu'amma'i had lifelong association with Babur. His chief distinction was in the field of Mu'amma riddle, a literary device very much in fashion during the Timurid period. Also, he was a competent scholar of religious sciences. The chronogram of his death was Shihab-i- Saqib.

Baqā'I Maulana: He Possessed mastery over diverse forms of poetry. One of his masnawis on the pattern of Nizami's Makhzam-i-Asrar gained much popularity among the literary men of Babur's court.

Khwajah Kalan Beg: He was one of the nobles who remained always loyal to Babur during his vicissitudes. The Khwajah's hometown was Herat. Endowed with highly cultivated literary taste, his verses often won the applause of his master on whose death the Khwajah composed an elegy.''²

Babur's son successor, Humayun (937/1530-964/1556) was also a poet of merit, who moreover possessed a wide knowledge of astronomy. To his inborn talent he added a systematic study of the Persian classical writers. His lyrical divan, which was discovered in Patna in the year 1940, contained 211 verses. They are full of perspicacity and humour, piety and erudition, historical references to events and persons, so that they provide a perfect reflection of the emperor's life and passion. Following the example of his father, he was a patron of the arts and favored the Persian language above the Turkish.

There were famous poets of Humayun's court were like ---

Amanullah: “Shaikh Amanullah Panipati, a learned Sufi and theologian and resident of Panipat was one of Humayun's chief poets and Amanullah wrote several qasidas in praise of his emperor. His style is comparatively simple and his poetry sweet and full of pathos. He was famous in his day for his qit'as in the form of chronograms (where the numerical value of the letters of the last line spell out a date, usually of the death of a famous person of the time).

Mirza Kamran: Mirza Kamran, the younger brother of Emperor Humayun, was a brave, ambitious and liberal prince. He freely associated with men of learning. Simultaneously he was a meritorious poet, both in Persian and Turki. He had a Diwan to his credit. For more than two decades he had caused much anxiety to Humayun by his excessively ambitious behavior. At last he was captured, blinded and sent in exile in 960/1553 to Mecca, where he died three years later. When he was leaving for Mecca, Humayun visited him to bid him farewell. Kamran presented an ode in praise of his brother which opened with:

(The fold of the poor man's turban brushes the sky, when the shadow of a monarch, like you, falls on his head).’’³

Farighi, Shaikh ‘Abd ul-Wahid :- Impressed by his unworldly and human character, Humayun employed him as poet in his court. His death occurred in Agra and he was buried in front of the Khanqah built by Shaikh Zain Khawafi, 940/ 1533.”

Haidar Tuni : He was well known for his poetry as well as mastery over music. He ridiculed the chief astrologer of Humayan's court and the Satire was acknowledged as a witty performance. It greatly amused the emperor's literary circle.

Sabuhi Chaghata : He belonged to Heart, modern Afganistan and lived as a poet at the court of Humayan with the triumphant re-entry of his patron. Sabuhi came to India and witnessed the early decade of Akbar's reign. He enjoyed the literary company of Qasim-i-Kahi, who obliged Sabuhi by composing a chronogram on his death which occurred at Agra. Sabuhi the drunkard, Sabuhi-i-Maikhwar 973/1565.

Tarumi, Mulla 'Ali' Muhaddis : He belonged to Tarum, near Samarqand and was patronized by Humayun for his scholarship. His contemporaries acknowledged him as a traditionist although he was successful enough in composing poetry. He visited India a second time in the reign of Akbar and Mulla 'Alim Kabuli, the court poet composed chronogram of his death, which occurred in Agra. He was the author of a commentary on Imam Abu Hanifa's Figh-i-Akbar.'''⁴

Shaikh Bahlul : Shaikh Bahlul, the elder brother of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus (d. 1562), was a man of great spiritual attainments and lived at Agra. Humayan held him in high esteem for his learning and piety. In 945/1539, when Humayun was in the east, Mirza Hindal tried to enthrone himself at Agra. Shaikh Bahlul protested where upon Hindal got him murdered.

Shaikh Bahlul was a poet of eminence, he wrote lyrico-religious poems and left a Diwan of ghazals. The following verses throw light on his trend of thought in poetry.

(I have driven out all other thoughts from my heart so that your thoughts alone reside in it).''⁵

Moulana Nadiri Samarqandi: Maulana Nadiri Samarqandi was another poet of repute attached to Humayun's court. He was regarded as one of the wonders of the

age on account of his profound learning. He wrote enchanting poetry. He died in 966/1559.

The following verses are from his pen:

(I am grieved, and my heart, on your account, suffers from a hundred sorrows without the rubies of your lips. I am constantly in pain. Poor and dejected I am in this life. I hope death will bring me relief.)’’⁶

There were famous poets of Akbar’s court were--

Ghazali Mashhadi : (1527-1572) Ghazali Mashhadi was poet laureate at the court of Akbar and left his name among the masters whose genius elevated the dignity and importance of Persian ghazal. He had initially come to the Deccan, but his poetic talents were not properly recognized there. So he was called from the Deccan to Jaunpur by Khan-i-Zaman who was the imperial governor there. Kha-i-Zaman had sent him one thousand rupees for his travel expneses. At Jaunpur he was treated generally. He became a fast friend of Maulana Qasim Kahi who also adored Khan-i-Zaman court. Ghazali joined service under Emperor Akbar and was soon elevated to the title of Malik-ush-Shu’are. He died suddenly in Ahmadabad on Friday, 27 Rajab 980/3 December 1572 and was buried in Sarkhej. According to Abul Fazl “He was unrivalled in depth of understanding and sweetness of language and was well acquainted with the noble thoughts of the Sufis.” He left behind nearly 50,000 verses. A voluminous Diwan of verses was Ghazali’s legacy to posterity. Also, he composed a masnawi Nagsh-i-badi.’’⁷

Qasim-i-Kahi: His birth place was Miyankal, a mountainous village near Samarqand, and passed considerable time of his life in the city of Kabul. He is more popularly referred to as Maulana Qasim Kahi. He was born near Bukhara, passed his early life

in Kabul and in 1533 came to India. Here he attached himself to Khan-i-Zaman and Bahadur Khan, governor of Jaunpur and Benares. After the fall of the two brothers, he entered service under Akbar and settled at Agra, where he died in 1580. Besides being an interpreter of the Quran, a fine logician, a man of mysticism, generous in habit, a musician and a renowned conversationist with sardonic wit, he was a distinguished poet and composed verses under the pen-name Kahi. His poetry is fresh both in diction and content.

Abul Faiz Faizi : He was the elder brother of Abul Fazl. He became the poet laureate of Akbar nearly fourteen years after the first holder of the title, Ghazali Mashhadi, had died. Faizi was a man of deep learning and erudition, very generous and a poet of high order and liberal outlook. He had the honour of having been tutor to all the three sons (i.e. Salim, Murad and Daniyal) of Akbar one after another. He sincerely believed in the policy of Sulh-i-kul; in fact he was one of the authors of universalism in faith the other two being his father, Shaikh Mubarak, and his younger brother, Abul Fazl. Faizi tried his pen in various fields:

1. Sawati'ul-Ilham, commentary of the Quran in undotted letters, revealing his innovative character and power of articulation. It raised him to the rank of celebrities, respected for religious learning.
2. The Bhagwad Gita, song of Krishna, the charming portion from the Mahabharat. Faizi's translation subscribed to the larger project of rendering the sacred books of the Hindus into Persian, which Akbar and his devoted circle of associates had undertaken to accomplish.
3. Lilawati, translation of an astronomical and mathematical treatise.
4. Diwan of verses, containing chiefly ghazals and qasidahs.

5. Nal-Dawan, a masnawi narrating the romance of two lovers born in the province of Malwah.
6. Markaz-i-adwar, a didactic masnawi on the model of Shaikh Nizami of Ganjah.
7. Lata if-i-Faizi, collection of letters.’’⁸

Muhammad Jamaluddin Urfi Shirazi : Sayed Jamaluddin Muhammad widely known as Urfi was born in 1555 at Shiraz. He derived his penname from the term Urf given to the secular or non religious department in Persian. One of which his father Zainud – din Alawr, had been occupied. When Urfi came to India he reached Fatch pur secreey, where he presented himself, Faizy who received him cordially treated him with all possible kindness and favour. For some time Urfi linked under his patronage but he could not stay there for long and soon after he was attached to Hakim Amir. Abul Fatch Gilani, the letter held high rank in the court of Akbar himself being a great scholar of oriented language, he entertained at his court as many eminent poets and writers as possible. He came to India at the beginning of his poetic career and stayed with several nobles, such as Faizi Hakim Abdul Fath Gitani and Abdur Rahim Khan – i – Khanan. It was the Khan – i – Khanan who introduced him to Emperor Akbar. Urfi was a highly talented poet, his style and diction marked the choicest and the finest Jewel – work of fastidious artist. His Diwan was readily available in any book shop. Unfortunately, he was not destined to live long. He died of poisoning in 1591 when he was just thirty six years age. He was first buried in Lahore, but nearly thirty years later his remains were carried to and reinterred at Najar Sharif. According to Abul Fazl, just on the eve his death Urfi composed the following quatrain –

(Urfi! You are dying, yet you are carefree; on what account are you depending? Tomorrow, when the Friend offers paradise in return for a price (good deeds). What will you show?)

Though essentially a qasida writer, he himself declared that ghazal was first love:

*Qasida writing is the profession of the greedy. 'Urfi, you belong to the tribe of lovers, your field is, therefore, ghazal.'*⁹

It is said that urfi cherished love for the price salim. However he was poisoned by someone who caused his death of an early age of thirty six in 1591 A.D. He buried in Nozat – i – Ashat where Hazarat Ali (Peace be on him) was attained nearly by chance. It is also happened that once long after his death a dervish came in Lahore and mistaking the grave of Urfi for one of his brother dug in to open and taken out the bones of Urfi and went to Nazaf – i – Ashraf where he buried those bones near the shrine of Hazarat Ali (peace be on him). Urfi had long before expressed his desire in the following lines:-

Despite dying young, Urfi had a great impact on his contemporaries through the force of both his personality and his poetry. He was hypersensitive, quick to take offense and respond to any taunt with a ready wit a sharp tongue. E.G Brown in his book literary history of Persia mentioned that “One day Urfi finds his sponsor, Faizi, holding puppy and asks the name of the “young master” when Faizi answers “Urfi”, Urfi replies, “Mobarak Basad” both offering his congratulations on the new pet and suggested that Faizi ought to name it after his father, Shekh Mobarak. Even his most sympathetic biographer, Abd-al-Baqi of Nahavand, remarks on Urfi’s open disregard for the standard protocol and etiquette of the Mughal court. Urfi Shirazi often used to

declared that his poetry to be superior not only to that of his contemporaries, but also unrivalled by the greatest poets of the past, such as Kaqani, Anwari and Nizami. The author of *Tabakat-e-Akbari* suggested that this egotism of Urfi was the cause of the poet's premature demise. Even it was found that Urfi offended many of his fellow poets. However exaggerated Urfi's lofty estimation of his own talents, his claims were not unfounded. His poetry enjoyed great popularity in his life time through out the Persian-speaking world. E.J.W Gibb remarks on Urfi formative influence on Ottoman Turkish poetry as well. Awhadi of Balyan and Abd-al Baqi of Nahavand identify "Urfi as the "inventor of the "*taza-e-taza*". No single poet can justly be given credit for the emergence of the "fresh" or Indian" style. Urfi played a crucial role in the move away from the colloquial diction and realist aesthetics of the maktab-e-woqu and toward a new valuation of conceptual subtlety and imagistic complexity. Among the Urfi's works his qasidas have met with special critical acclaim. Though a few of these are addressed to Urfi's early Safavid patrons, most date from his career in India and are dedicated to Abul Fateh of Gilan, Abdur rahim Khan-e-Khanan, Prince Salim and Akbar. Urfi also wrote a number of devotional qasidas on the Prophet Muhammad and Imam Ali, including his single longest work in this genre, entitled *Tarjomat al sawq*. Anna Livia Beelaert analyzes this poem as an example of thematic genre of the *sowgand-nama* and a creative imitation of an earlier panegyric by Kamal al-din of Isfahan. Urfi also wrote responses to the recognized masters of the genre such as Khaqani and Anwari. Like these poets, "Urfi often makes learned allusion to such fields as logic and medicine, inspiring in India a series of commentaries on his qasidas.

Urfi's style

As regards urfi's style it is admitted on all hand that he had a complete mastery over almost all kinds of Persian poetry. He always exceed all over poets of his time whenever he entered the list of poetry writing of all one various kinds of poetry urfi was deficient in writing Masnavi.

It has qasida and ghazal that won him such worldwide reputation. He introduced new and original construction and style by his qasidas in a Persian poetry which never been used by his predecessors contributed very much to works the establishment of Persian language and literature. His style in the qasida has been praised for its measured, yet fluent diction, continuity of theme over extended passages, the coinage of new metaphorical compounds, and innovative comparisons. His mastery of the qasida has perhaps unjustly overshadowed his ghazals, which at their best demonstrate a powerful command of language and subtlety of thought and imagery. Urfi's real strength, however, is in his handling of philosophical and gnostic themes. His Diwan also contains a few tarkib and tarji bands and several dozen qetas mostly on courtly themes as well as a couple of hundred rubai's.

Urfi Begun work on a kamsa on the model of Nezami, but he died before bringing even one of the five projected masnavis to completion. He finished a little over 1400 verses of Majma-ul Akbar, which consists of ethical and dadicate tales in a Sufi mode. Only four hundred verses of the introductory section of his Farhad-o-Sirin survive. Besides over scattered rhymed couplets, Urfi did completea short Saqi nama, a genge much in vogue at the time. Urfi's interest in Sufism is again apparent in his short prose work entitled Resala-i-nafsiya. Finally, samples of his personal

correspondence and other prose jotting have been gleaned from manuscript miscellanies and some copies of his Diwan.

It is generally believed that the verse, which is inscribed in the Diwan-i-Khas of the Red Fort in Delhi, was composed by Urfi when he went to Kashmir and eulogized the sylvan beauty of the valley. The verse is:

Gar firdous bar ru-i-zamin ast

Hami ast o, hami ast o, hamin ast!

(If there is paradise on the face of the earth

It is this, it is this, it is this)’’,¹⁰

In another beautiful poem Urfi praises the beauty of Kashmir as follows:

Each and every grieved soul that comes to Kashmir becomes happy, even if the bird of roasted plunage (wings) comes out from its body.

Two main features of his style are briefly summed up here –

- i) High standing words and arrangement concise from lofty ideas, loan large in the poems of Urfi.
- ii) Urfi has used new arrangement and combination of words which helped to express one thought more explicitly and adequately.

Some important poets of Jahangir's Court were---

Mirza Ghazi Beg Tar Khan:(d.1609) He was the son of Mirza Jani Beg Tar Khan.

On the death of his father's death in 1601, he was made to succeed him to the government of Thatta. Jahangir, on his accession, granted him the high rank of 7,000 and sent him to govern Qandahar, where he died in 1609 when barely twenty-five years of age. He was a keen patron of letters and himself composed poetry, his pen-

name being Waqari. It is said that there was a poet in Qandahar who bore this poetic name, and that the Mirza bought this title from him by giving him rupees ten thousand in cash, a robe of honour and a horse. He was also unequalled as a singer and player on the tam bourine. For sometime such literary giants and poets as Mulla Murshid Yazdjardi, Talib Amuli, Mir Nimatullah asili and Mulla asd, the story teller, were associated with him.”¹¹

“Nur Jahan Begum, Mehr un Nisa : She was the daughter of Mirza Ghiyas Beg I’timad ud-Dawlah and sister of Abul Nasan Asraf Khan, the prime Ministers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan respectively. Initially, her wedding took place, with Sher Afghan Khan, an Iranian noble of ordinary rank posted in Bengal. By deliberate mischief or mere accident, young Sher Afghan was slain in a violent scuffle with the provincial governor (1016/1607). Fortune smiled on the young widow. For, in less than four years, she entered Jahangir’s harem as chief Queen and took in her hands the control of the empire coins were stuck in her name and imperial firmans bore her signature. As regards her last days, popular memory has preserved a strikingly romantic episode that depicted her true character, of course. From her retreat in Lahore, she wrote to her ruling step-son Shah Jahan, expressing that last wish: a place for the grave. The shadow of her husband’s tomb should ever fall on it. It will be a memorial to posterity of a woman’s selfless devotion. Possessing creative imagination and cultivated taste, Nur Jahan Begum, through her stray verses, left a claim upon the writers of anthologies to include her name in their accounts.”¹²

“Naziri, Muhammad Husain : He belonged to Nishapur and arrived in the reign of Akbar. Poetry being most popular art of age, his contemporaries soon acknowledged Naziri’s exceptional merits. He chose Ahmadabad, Gujrat. For his residence,

although, to attend the company of his patron, Khan-i-Khanan, whose military headquarters shifted from place to place, he stayed at many other cities of the empire. Once, Jahangir's invitation brought him to the Imperial Capital, and as recorded in the Tuzuk, the Emperor was very much pleased with the poet. Persian ghazal had the capacity to accept further refinement of expression and that was subscribed by Naziri. His Diwan ever remained popular in the sub-continent.’’¹³

Talib-i-Amuli: (d.1036/1626)) Sayyed Muhammad, Persian poet of the early 17th century. A precocious talent, Talib embarked on his literary career in his late teens, composing praise poems to notables in his native Mazandaran and gazals under the penname Asud. Beginning a lifetime of constant travel, he soon sought to further his court in the major literary centers of Persia. In Kashan his maternal uncle held a prominent position as court physician to Shah Tahmasp I, and Talib began a life-long friendship with his cousin and fellow-poet Hakim Ruk-un Din Masip. During a brief stay in Isfahan, Talib wrote two qasidas in honour of Shah Abbas I, when these failed to win him entry into the Safavid court, he moved to Marv, where he found a patron in the provincial governor around 1606.

He came to India as a young man during the reign of Jahangir. He emigrated from Amul, a small town in the south of Caspian Sea, and soon established his position as literary genius of the age. Before joining the imperial court he had enjoyed the patronage of several nobles, the most important of them being Mirza Ghazi Beg Tar Khen Waqari, the imperial governor of Qandahar, and Irimad – ud – Daulah.’’¹⁴

This young and brilliant military commander was himself a capable poet under the penname Waqari, and under the direction of the poet Morsed of Borujerd, his court became an important transit station for the traffic of literary talent between India

and Pakistan. After Mirza Gazi's premature death in 1612 at the age of only twenty-five, Talib again spend several years roaming about northern India. During his first appearance before Jahangir, Talib was left speechless by way and the opium that he had taken beforehand to calm his nerves, but he gradually worked his way back to the imperial court through his service with Mughal generals such as Qalis Khan in Surat and Firoz Jang in Gujrat. However, it was a chance meeting in Lahore with the poet Sapur of Tehran and an introduction to his uncle Khwaja Giyasuddin Md. E'temad al Dowla that opened Talib's path to the Emperor's inner circle. With the support of his influential administrator, Talib entered Jahangir's service about 1616 and was appointed to the poet laureate in 1619.

For the next several years, Talib accompanied Jahangir on his frequent journeys through his domains. However, the poet apparently suffered from a mental infirmity during the final years of his life, and the circumstances of his death are unclear. When he died in 1626-7, he left two young daughters orphans. They were adopted by his nelder sister Sati-al Nesa, with whom he shared a deep affection throughout his life.

By most reports, Talib was an amiable man who avoided the bitter personal rivalries that often flared up among the poets of Mughal India. His contemporary Fakr-al-Zamani of Qazvin reports that the poet was "good-natured and affable" and Awhadi of Balyani, who met Talib in both Isfahan and Ajmir, praises his "joyous" and industrious temperament. Such personal qualities help explain the ease with which Talib moved between patron and his prolificacy. Although it is uncertain when his works were first collected, full manuscripts of his diwan date from only a few years after his death, and many contain well over 20,000 verses. His short masnavi,

Qazava qadar tells the fantasy tale of a shipwrecked sailor marooned with beautiful woman on a desert isle. His other two works in rhymed couplets, also less than 500 verses long, were written for special occasions: one to leave from Bektas Khan in Merv and the other to celebrate an outdoor banquet held by Jahangir. Over seventy qasidas and dozens of short qitas provide a full; and fascinating record of his professional life as courtier and panegyrist. Like other poets rose in Safavid Persia, Talib dedicated a number of devotional poems to the Shiite Imams. His strophic poems appear to date from early in his career and cover a similar range of topics. However, by far the greatest portion of his divwan consists of ghazals-some 1750 in number and it is these lyric poems that are largely the basis of his later critical reception.

Though most contemporaries gave fulsome praise to Talib's originality and creativity, a dissenting voice seems to have had the greatest Impact on modern scholarship. Monir of Lahor reports meeting Talib and asking him about an obscure verse from the notoriously difficult 12th century poet Khaqani, when Monir laughed out loud at the poet's absurd explication, Talib rejoined, "In India, they only study such verses, while I can write them with my toenails". Not surprisingly, Talib is a prime target of Monir's attack on the "fresh style" of contemporary poetry in his *Karnama* though ali Khan Arzu mounted a vigorous defense of Talib a century later, this anecdote was given new life in an early 18th century collective biography of poets Makzanal-garaib, and found its way into modern criticism through Sebli-Numni and Talib's Editor, Taheri Sehab. Talib enjoys the dubious distinction of being deemed a "natural genius" whose technical acumen sometimes failed to match the exuberance of his imagination. Even sympathetic modern biographersd feel obliged to include a

sampling of the poet's "incomprehensible" verses, the broader and more representative selections from Talib's ghazals by Qahraman and Abd al Rasid Kaja give a far more positive impression of the poet's range and capability.

Talib played a crucial role in the rapid transformation of poetic style at the beginning of the 17th century. His work gave free rein to the tendency towards contuaptualism in the "free style" that had begun to emerge a generation earlier in the poetry of Naziri and Urfi. Like them, Talib showed his debt to the past by responding to poems by renowned predecessors such as Kaqani in the qasida and Sadi, Amir Khusraw and Hafiz in ghazal. At the same time he gives a new vitality to conventional images and common idioms by exploring their full figurative implications. His elaboration of two unobtrusive metaphors of everyday speech offers a small indication of how his imagination works. He revives the dead metaphor of "the house of religious law" in a single long noun phrase that exposes the spiritual ruin behind a sartorial façade of clerical ostentation.

His poetic style was simple but captivating. He was very fond of using similes and metaphors in his poetry which easily distinguished him from his contemporaries. It was Itimad – ud – Daulah who introduced him to Emperor Jahangir, who impressed by his unique poetic excellence, appointed him the poet-laureate in January, 1619. He died in 1626 and was buried outside Lahore.

Some specimens of his lyrical verses and a quatrain are cited below:

(Talib, make no haste in passing your judgement about a person. Many a time I took one to be an infidel and he turned out to be a Muslim)

(So many beauties have taken residence in my heart that it may be called the idol – house)

(The dust of the tavern emits fragrance of happiness, and possesses the medicine which can cure all my ailments. If you are acquainted with my heart, step into my eyes and repose there)

Aurangzeb (1658-1707 A.D)

The success of Aurangzeb in the war of succession was the success of the ablest son of Shah Jahan and therefore , when he crowned himself of emperor, the Mughal empire went under the command of the strongest and the most capable person within the empire. Aurangzeb ruled for a long period, from A.D 1658 to 1707, and therefore , the empire could get the advantage of his best talents. Aurangzeb succeeded as well. The Mughal empire reached the zenith of its power during his rule. Yet, ultimately, Aurangzeb failed and brought misfortune to his empire.’’¹⁵

“According to Sir J.N. Sarkar, the famous biographer of Aurangzeb, “The history of Aurangzeb is practically the history of India for sixty years. His own reign (1658-1707) covers the second half of the seventeenth century and stands forth as a most important epoch in the annals of our country. Under him the Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent and the largest single state ever known in India from the dawn of history to the rise of the British power was formed. From Ghazni to Chittagong, from Kashmir to the Karnatak, the continent of India obeyed one scepter. Islam made its last onward movement in India in the reign. The Empire thus formed, while unprecedented in Size, was also one political unit. Its provinces were governed not by the meditation of Sub-Kings, but directly by servants of the Crown. Herein Aurangzeb’s Indian Empire was vaster than that of Asoka or Samudragupta or Harshavardhan. Again, “The life of Aurangzeb was one long tragedy, the story of a man battling in vain against an invisible but inexorable fate and this tragedy in history

was developed with all the regularity of a perfect drama. After having settled with his brothers, Aurangzeb ascended the throne in July 1658. However, the formal accession, Aurangzeb assumed the title of Alamgir. In 1661, he received ambassadors from Persia and Bokhara who were sent to congratulate him on his succession. As all the possible rivals had already been disposed of Aurangzeb enjoyed comparative peace.”¹⁶

Poets of Aurangzeb’s Court were ---

Ahsan ullah Lahori, Hafiz : He was teacher in a madrasah at Lahore and compiled a text-book that was included in the syllabus of education. It contained selections from the verses of classical poets and its title was: Miffah ul-Afwah, completed in 1106/1694.

Alawi, Muhammad Tahir Hussain : He came from Kashan, Iran in the reign of Aurangzeb, and settled in Kashmir. As a poet, he treated Jalal Asir as his literary guide and imitated his style. He left a Diwan and the Masnawi poem: Haddad was Hallaj.

Bayani: He belonged to the Deccan and lived during the days of Aurangzeb. He picked up an old and popular tale of two legendary lovers: Mahyer and Chanderbadan, and rendered it into Persian. Oddly enough, the poet used two metres. Hazaj and Mutaqarib, in that Masnawi. It appeared as: Ishq-namah, 1105/1693.

Fana’I Kashmiri: He lived as a poet in the reign of Aurangzeb and was the disciple of a Sufi, Shaikh Luqman b. Shaikh Usman. He composed a masnawi in praise of prophets and kings. Then work contained the account of his spiritual guide, Shaikh Luqman, and praise of the emperor, Aurangzeb. Its title was: Jahan- namah.”¹⁷

BACK NOTE:

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2. *Hadi, Navi. History Of Indo-Persian Literature, p-252*
3. *Smith,Paul. The Book Of Mughal Poets, pp-162-172*
4. *Hadi, Navi. History of Indo-Iranian Literature , pp-255-256*
5. *Qamaruddin, Dr. p-19*
6. *Smith, Paul. P-175*
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8. *Hadi, Navi. Pp-296-298*
9. *bid, pp-60-61*
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11. *Qamaruddin, Dr. p-10*
12. *Ibid, p-100*
13. *Hadi, Navi. P-374*
14. *Qamaruddin, Dr. p-104*
15. *Prasad, L. A Simple History Of Medieval India, p-79*
16. *Ibid, p-158*
17. *Hadi, Navi. Pp-459-462*

CHAPTER - IV

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PERSIAN POETS MIGRATED TO INDIA DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD

The Mughal period is regarded as one of the most important periods of India for the development of Persian language and literature. This period is especially known for the development of Persian literature as well as other vernacular literature of India.

The rulers of this period were great scholars, poets and penmen and they liberally patronised the learned. Persian poetry as well as Persian historical prose tremendously progressed during the Mughal period. They were fond of poetry. The founder of Mughal dynasty in India Jahiruddin Muhammad Babur himself was a quatrain and ghazal writer. His son and successor Humayun was possessor of a Diwan (Collection of poems). Other rulers of this period like Jahangir and Shahjahan were also fond of poetry except Aurangzeb who never wanted to appoint court poet and patronize the poets.

During the Mughal period, Persian poets and scholars from various parts of Iran and Central Asia began to congregate in India. The foremost reason was that the safavi rulers of Iran did not reward and patronise their court poets. On the contrary, the powerful Mughal emperors were always ready to welcome and patronised the poet who migrated to their courts. Another factor that played an important part in the emigration of Persian poets to India was the severe centralisation of the Persian Government and the Shiite oppression.

The Persian poets were guests at the courts of India. The continuous rivalry that existed between the empire, which was being consolidated by the Mughal and the minor sultanates of the Deccan made the various monarchs feel the need of having their praises sung and they were willing to play their panegyrists lavishly.

For the first time in history we can thus speak of a large scale emigration of Persian writers to India, whereas the earlier contacts between Iran and India has been brought about by the Ghaznavid invasions via Afghanistan and Turkistan.

Consequently, The Mughal Empire in India has rightly been called a 'cultural state'. Humayun's stay in Iran led to closer contact between India and Iran. During Akbar's reign, when Mughal Empire was consolidated, a general immigration of nobles and generals as well as men of arts and letters from Iran and Central Asia deeply moulded the Indo-Muslim civilization. Iranian etiquette and culture were supplanted in the Mughal Court. This was enhanced by the presence of Iranian as well as highly Persianized immigrants who flocked to Mughal court fearing or escaping from the persecution which had resulted from the sectarian policy followed by the Safavids in Iran. A strong cultural influence was exerted by Persian in India which became the court language and language of the literature.

"Persian poetry, which had integrated many themes and ideas from pre-Islamic Iran and had been an important vehicle of liberalism in the medieval world, helped in-significant way in creating and supporting the Mughal attempt to accommodate diverse religious traditions. To a poet, neither the mosque nor the temple is illumined by Divine Beauty, the high place of love for God. Poets like Urfi and Talib Amuli raised the call to transcend the difference of Sheikh and Brahman, the mosque and the temple and in this manner Persian facilitated the Mughal cultural conquest in India.'" ¹

The Mughal period witnessed the culmination of the development of all forms of Persian literature particularly Persian poetry.

Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur

“Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was the founder of Mughal dynasty in India. He reigned in India from 932/1525 until 937/1530, wrote his excellent memories, but he was nevertheless also an accomplished poet in Persian. Babur fought battle, composed poetry and collected books all his life.”² He was a born poet and wrote verses both in Turki and Persian. The only person who surpassed him in turning out more beautiful poetry in Turki was ‘Ali Sher Nawai’ (1440-1501), the prime minister and friend of Sultan Hussain Baiqara of Heart (1468-1506). The Mughal Emperor composed Persian verses under the pen-name, Babur. By far the longest part of his Persian poetry bears the mark of sufi mysticism, of which Babur was an ardent practiser, especially under the influence of his father, a keen reader of Jalaluddin Rumi’s mathnavi.

Babur derived the majority of the ideas in his quatrains and ghazals from Hafiz and his contemporary Jami. His quatrains have touch of mysticism –

در هوای نفس گمره عمر ضائع کرده ایم
پیش اهل الله زافعال خود شرمندہ ایم
یک نظریہ مخلصان کشتہ دل فرما کہ ما
خواجگی راماندہ ایم و خواجگی رابندہ ایم

(I have wasted my life in the vain pursuit of my astrayed heart and am ashamed before the man of God in consequence of my misdeeds.

Cast a look at my sincere, broken heart, for I am a devoted follower and a humble servent of khwajagi)

This quatrain is addressed to the departed soul of Khwaja “Ubaidullah Ahrar (1404-1490), who in his lifetime enjoyed the title of khwaja – i – khwajagan and was briefly known as khwajagi. Ali Sher Nawai on the death of the Khwaja, composed the following quatrain by way of a chronogram in which the full title is clearly mentioned:

درویشانرا گرچه نه از خویشانیم
 لیک از دل و جامعتقد ایشانیم
 دوز است مگوئی شهی از درویشی
 شاهیم ولی بنده درویشانیم
 آمد بهار دلشده را که یار نیست
 پروای لاله زار و هوای بهار نیست
 در روزگار فتنه بسی دیده ام ولی
 چشم توفتنه است که در روزگار نیست^۱

(I am not one of the dervishes, yet am their follower at heart says not that a king avoids a dervish. I am king, yet a slave of dervishes)”³

“(For a lover without his beloved, the garden of tulip and the spring are of no value.

I have seen much mischief in his world, but not like the one, in your eyes)”⁴

Babur wrote beautiful and romantic ghazals of very high standard in simple Persian. A few of his lyrical verses are cited here.

صد وعده داد از لب شیرین خویش لیک
 مردم درین امید که وعده وفانه کرد
 تا او کشاد آن لب پر خنده در چمن
 پیراهنی نه ماند که غنچه قبانه کرد

(The sweet lipped beloved made a hundred promises, but fulfilled none.)

From her broad smile in the garden, the buds learnt to open themselves into bloom)

بایر بکوئی دوست همی خواست جان دهد
این کار دولت است چه سازد خدا نه کرد
تا بزلل سیاهش دل بستم
از پریشانئ عالم رستم
خراپاتی ورنه و می پرستم
به عالم هرچه می گویند هستم

(Babur wished to sacrifice his life in the quarters of the beloved but misfortune denied him this honour)

(Ever since my heart got bound to her dark locks, I have gained freedom from the griefs of the world)

(People call me a dweller of the tavern, a drunkard and a worshipper of wine. I admit I deserve these epithets.)

Babur loved to have around him as many poets and men of letters as he could find. However, on account of his earlier political career being devoted continually to struggles for survival and his later years being spent in wars of conquest, he could not gather many persons of literary merits at his court. Even then, a number of learner men joined him and adorned his court first at Kabul and then at Agra.

There were famous Persian poets at Babur courts and their life sketches have been discussed below-

- a) Tahir Bukhari
- b) Sheikh Zain Khawafi
- c) Sheikh Abdul Wahid Farighi
- d) Sheikh Shibuddin Muammai
- e) Qara Bahadur Khan

- f) Mulla Baqai
- g) Surkh Widai
- h) Atishi Qandhari
- i) Khwajah Kalam Beg

Tahir Bukhari

“Tahir Bukhari was a man of devotion and piety. He left Kabul when Babar was still there. He went away to Herat and actively participated in the literary activities there. He was a distinguished poet. The following ghazal of his, which he had sent from Herat, when recited in the presence of Babar, was highly appreciated by the Emperor.”⁵

تا آرزوی آن لب میگون کند کسی
 بسیار غنچه وار جگر خون کند کسی
 سنعنم مکن که هیچ بجای نمی رسد
 سعی که در نصیحت مجنون کند کسی
 خلقی ملامتم کند و من برین که آه
 از دل چگونه مهر تو بیرون کند کسی
 گفتی که طاهر از پی خوبان دگر مرو
 دیوانه را علاج بافیون کند کسی

(One has to shed much of one's live – blood, before one can desire to kiss the beloved's wine – like lips.

Do not ask me to give up my love; your advice, like one's to Manjun will bear no fruit.

People condemn me for loving you, but how can anyone drive our love out of my heart?

*You say, 'O Tahir, do no more run after the fair ones. "It is like treating a mad person with doses of opium)"*⁶

Sheikh Zain Khawafi:

Sheikh Zain Khawafi served Babar as Sadar. He was according to Abul Fazl, well versed in the art of composition both in prose and poetry. In poetry his pen-name was Wafi. He survived Babar to serve in the same capacity under Humayun.⁷ /He died in 1533. Two quatrains of his are cited to show the high quality of his poetry

آرمیدی برقیان و رسیدی از ما
ماچه کردیم و چه دیدی چه شنیدی از ما
بهر دل بردن ما حاجت بیداد نه بود
می سپردیم اگر می طلبیدی از ما

(You adopted the company of my rivals in preference to mine can you tell me for what fault of mine you did this?

There was no need for you to use force and snatch my heart.

Had you just asked for it, I would have made it over to you⁸

غم گریبان گیر شد سردر گریبان چون کشم
شوق دامن گیر آمد پابدامن چون کشم
ای گریبانم ز شوق پاره دامن چاک چاک
بیتو پادر دامن و سردر گریبان چون کشم

(Grief has overwhelmed me, but I shall not run away from it.

Desire for your proximity does not allow me to sit idle.

Your love has cost me dearly, but I cannot do without you, come what may)⁹

Moulana Shihabuddin Mu'amma'i

“Moulana Shihabuddin Mu'amma'i come from Herat in 1528 and enrolled himself among the countries of Babar. He was a poet, his pen-name being Haqire. He was also a reputed scholar and well-known for his eloquence. He died in 942/1535.”¹⁰

The following quatrains belong to him –

این سحره نه آمده است چون سحر حلال
نظم و نثرش پاک تر از آب زلال
نورست ز انوار شهاب ثاقب
کز منقبتش زبان فکرت شده لال

(The writing is like lawful magic, its poetry and prose are purer than purest water.

*It shines like the brightest star, its dignity cannot be describe in words)*¹¹

از بهر فریب دل ما خسته دلان
هر لحظه زناز آن صنم غنچه دهان
بر صفحه گل کرد رقم آن سر زلف
وانگه رخ مه کرد زیک گوشه عیان

(In order to deceive the heart of this broken hearted one, that beauty with a rosebud like mouth is constantly exhibiting coquetry.

She carved her theses upon the leaf of the rose and then from one corner displayed her moon – bright face).

Qara Bahadur Khan:

Qara Bahadur Khan, the cousin of Mirza Haidar, the author of the Tarikh – i – Rashidi, come to India with Babar and lived to serve Akbar as a mansabdar of seven hundred. Akbar held him in high esteem.”¹² Qara sometimes composed verses.

The following qutrains is ascribed to him –

یا از سر کوی یار باید برخواست
یا از سک کوی یار کام باید بود

(A lover must acquaint himself with care, anxiety and agony of tyranny. Either he must avoid the road which leads to the beloved's residence or should no mind the dogs here)" ¹³

Atishi Qandhari

Atishi Qandhari arrived in the company of Babur and fought at Panipat. After the battle was over, he approached his master and reminded him of the promise to return. Babur summoned his commanders and delivered a short speech. He announced his intention to say; but allowed them full liberty to go back. Let everybody decided for him, Atishi spurred his horse and took road to Kabul. Unluckily, he could not reach his destination and died in Lahore. He was a poet and composed tolerable verses.

Baqā – i – Maulana:

He possessed mastery over diverse forms of poetry. One of his masnawis on the pattern of Nizami's Makhzan – i – Asrar gained much popularity among the literary men of Babur's court.

Khwajah Kalan Beg:

Khwajah Kalan Beg was one of the nobles who remained always loyal to Babur during his vicissitudes. The Khwajah's hometown was Herat. Endowed with highly cultivated literary taste, his verses often won the applause of his master, on whose death the Khwajah composed an elegy .

Humayun Nasir – ud – Din Muhammad

“He was the eldest son of Babur, the empire builder. On the eve of his birth at Kabul, 914/1508, the overjoyed father, hitherto Mirza Babur, assumed for himself the

tile of Badshah. Like all Timurid princes, Humayun received excellent education and develop fondness for literature, astronomy and mathematics.”¹⁴ Despite personal woes, Babur did not ignore his upbringing and the loving father’s care turned him into a warrior scholar. In the first battle of Panipat, 933/1526, the young Humayun, aged 19 was given a crucial command and at the end of it, won his father’s affectionate pat on the back. It was after the great man’s rather untimely death that troubles gathered around Humayun in quick succession of 937/1530.”¹⁵ The company of poets, astronomers, scholars and men learned in all sciences from jurisprudence to alchemy and Indian Yoga, made Humayun a different man. One day, at last, news of the death of Salim Shah, son of Sher Shah, reached Kabul, 961/1553. Humayun consulted the Dewan of Khwajah Hafiz for omen. The khwajah’s verse gave out very encouraging meaning, which infused Humayun to take bold plan for trying his luck again. He tried and wrested the throne of Delhi from the Indian Afghans. Nothing could be more romantic than Humayun’s real life. To lose and regain kingdoms was familiar game of the Timurids. But the case of Humayun was different; he lost and won back the empire. Death did not allow him time for a longer rule and the accident fall from stairs of the library cut short his life, 963/1555. An expert in the field of astronomical science Humayun made improvements in astrolable and wrote a track on the nature and use of that instrument, which seemed to have been lost. His Diwan of verses has survived.

Humayun had a cultivated mind and, like his father, was not only an admirer of poetry but he wrote pleasant verses.”¹⁶ His sense of appreciation of others poetry was also high.

Humayun left a Diwan. Abul Fazl has quoted the following quatrains from his diwan.

ای دل مکن اضطراب در پیش رقیب
حال دل خود مگوی به هیچ طبیب
کاری ترابه آن جفا کار افتاد
بس قصه مشکل است و بس امر عجیب^۱

(Don't express your agony before the rival, nor reveal your pains to the physician.

What you have suffered at the hands of the tyrant (beloved) is woeful and a highly strange matter)"¹⁷

Humayun's court was blessed by the famous poet and scholars like –

- a. Maulana Nadiri Samarkandi
- b. Jahi Yatman Bukhari
- c. Haidar Tuniai
- d. Shah Tahir
- e. Bairam Khan
- f. Nuri, Nur – ud – Din
- g. Farighi, Shaikh Abdul Wahid
- h. Sabuhi Chaghata
- i. Tarumi, Mulla 'Ali Muhaddis
- j. Ghubari, Qasim Ali Khan
- k. Kahi, Qasim
- l. Bekasi, Ghaznaw Amir Beg
- m. Mulla Hairati

Maulana Nadiri Samarkandi

Maulana Nadiri Samarkandi was a poet and scholar of extra-ordinary qualities. Nadiri was another poet of repute attached to Humayun's court. His qasidah in praise of Humayun and some other verses have survived. He was regarded as one of the wonders of the age on account of his profound learning. He wrote enchanting poetry. Mir Amani Kabuli composed chronogram of his death. He died in 966/1559.”¹⁸

The following verses are from his pen –

رنجورم و در دل از تو دارم صد غم
بی لعل لبیت حریف دارم همه دم
زین عمر ملولم من مسکین غریب
خواهم شود آرام گهم کوی عدم

(I am grieved and my heart, on your account suffers from a hundred sorrows.

Without the rubies of your lips, I am constantly pain poor and dejected I am in this life.

I hope death will bring me relief)

وه چه خرام است قدیمار را
بنده شوم آن قد و رفتار را
یار سوی ما برترحم ندید
داشت مگر جانب اغیار را
سوی خرابات گذر نادری
در سرمی کن سرو دستار را¹

(My love one's from is graceful, I offer myself as a slave to her wondrous carriage.

The friend did not look at me with compassion, but she was favourably inclined towards my rivals.

Nadiri, go to the wine shop and pledge your lead and turban for wine)”¹⁹

Jahi Yatman Bukhari

Jahi Yatman Bukhari was another poet of distinction who joined service under Humayun at Kabul and won his trust. As the emperor marched with his army to try his luck in India once again, he left Shah Muhammad Khan Shapur as governor of Kabul. Shapur did not treat Jahi with sufficient respect and the poet cooled down his chagrin by composing an abusive lampoon against the governor and his whole family. Humayun invite Jahi to recite the poem in private assembly of friends and the hall resounded with laughter. He died in 956/1549, being poisoned by his servant.

The following verses belong to him –

تا بوده ایم عاشق و بدنام بوده ایم
اماز عاشقان باندام بوده ایم
پند پرسید که مقصود تو در عالم چیست
را، -، گویم که شما شمائید شما
خوبرویان همه بی مهر و فائید شما
باسیران زپی جور و جفائید شما
وعده کردید وفا طور دروغی گفتید
راست گوئید که این طور چرائید شما⁴

(I have been a lover all my life, and although I have earned ignominy for my love, I have been steadfast in my love.)

(How often will you ask “What is your object in this world?”

Believe me, you alone are my object!)

(O beauties! You are all devoid of sincere love and fidelity, and treat your lovers with tyranny and oppression.

You promised to be faithful, but acted to the contrary;

Why do you behave in such a false manner?)”²⁰

Haider Tunia'i

“Another poet of eminence at Humayun’s court was Haidar Tuna’i. He was well known for his poetry as well as mastery over music. He ridiculed the chief astrologer of Humayun’s court and the satire was acknowledged as a witty performance. It greatly amused the emperor’s literary circle.”²¹ His verses were distinguished for their technicalities of harmony, because he was not only a poet but a musician as well.

The following couplets are by him –

دلا چون غمیش مهربانی نداری
بجز دردش آرام جانی نداری^۱

(My heart, your pining for and suffering in her love have been your only friends and comforters in life.)

Shah Tahir

Shah Tahir was another important poet of Humayun’s court. His younger brother Shah Jafar who was widely known in Iraq, after he left for the Deccan and died there in 952/1545. It is on his account that he is called Deccan. Since he wrote copiously in praise of the Prophet’s holy family (Ahl –i – Bait), the chronogram of his death was found in Tab’I Ahl – i– Bait, which yield 952. A.H.

The following lyrical couplets belong to him –

ما بجزم عشق بدنامیم و زاهد از ریا
هر دو بدنامیم اما ما کجا و او کجا
بیرون میا که شهره ایام می شوی
ما کشته می شویم و تو بدنام می شوی^۱

(I have earned a bad name for the crime of my love and the devote for his hypocrisy! Both of us stand condemned, but what a difference there is between us!)

(Do not come out, for you will cause a commotion, we shall be stain and you will be blamed)

Khan- i- Khanan Bairam Khan: Bairam Khan was Humayun's chief counsellor during the latter's day of failure and hard luck, and he became the regent in the early days of Akbar enjoying the high title of Khan – i – Khanan. When Humayun's sudden and premature death brought Akbar aged thirteen, to the throne, he acted as regent and wazir. After sometime, Akbar was prompted by youthful ambition to assert independence, and Bairam Khan abandoned power. He announced his intention of going on pilgrimage to macca, the holy city and cherished abode of pious Muslims. On the way, a revengeful Afghan's dagger terminated his noble career in Gujrat. Bairam Shared with his contemporaries in raising the intellectual and aesthetic standards of their age. All of them, the emperor Humayun not accepted, were of the nature of delights that the domain of knowledge offered to human mind. Possessing wide range of interest, they applied themselves to a variety of subjects from astronomy and alchemy to poetry, which in their estimate, was the queen of all arts. Bairam's own field being ghazal, he had discovered the secret of simple expression. Each verse in his concise Diwan is a specimen of excellence. He turned out beautiful pieces of verses both in Persian and Turki with equal case and left a slim but rich Diwan of his compositions. His Persian lyrics were laced with carefully chosen words, phrase: and idioms and bore the stamp of eloquence and simplicity. A few verse of his ghazal and quatrains are cited here:-

بیرم دوام وصل مجواز بتان که هست
 در باغ دهر گاه خزان و گهی بهار
 بیرم سروسامان مطلب از من مجنون
 کز عشق بتی بی سروسامان شده ام باز
 چو گرد باد روم سوی آستانه او
 باین بهانه بگردم بگرد خانه او
 از وصل گلم خاطر محزون نکشاید
 گل را چه کنم آرزوی روی تو دارم

*(Bairam do not seek an ever-lasting proximity to the beauties in this world
 neither spring nor autumn is forever)*

*(Bairam do not ask me for requisites for I have lost everything in the love of a
 beauty)*

*(Like the wind dust I move to the gate of the beloved and make circuits of her
 house)*

*(The flower is unable to remove the gloom of my sadness. You alone can cause
 my heart to open up and bloom)”²²*

Sabuhi Chaghata’i

“Sabuhi Chaghata’i belonged to Herat, modern Afghanistan and lived as a
 poet at the court of Humayun. With the triumphant re-entry of his patron, Sabuhi
 came to India and witnessed the early decade of Akbar’s reign. He enjoyed the
 literary company of Qasim – i – Kahi, who obliged Sabuhi by composing a
 chronogram on his death which occurred at Agra: Sabuhi the drunkard, Sabuhi – i –
 Maikhwar 973/1565.

Tarumi, Mulla ‘Ali Muhaddis:

Belonged to Tarun, near Samarqand and was patronized by Humayun for his scholarship. His contemporaries acknowledged him as a traditionist although he was successful enough in composing poetry. He visited India a second time in the reign of Akbar and Mulla ‘Alim Kabuli, the court poet composed chronogram of his death, which occurred in Agra. He was the author of a commentary on Imam Abu Hanifa’s *Figh – i – Ahbar*.²³

Ghubari, Qasim Ali Khan:

Ghubari, Qasim Ali Khan was a poet at the court of Humayun and lived in Kabul. The emperor gave him administrative post and Ghubari controlled Ghaznah and its adjoining areas after the death of Prince Hindal (958/1551). As Humayun won back the empire of India from successors of Sher Shah, all his old servants, including Ghubari, were elevated in ranks (962/1554). Ghubari’s *Diwan* chiefly collection of ghazals, has survived.

Kahi, Qasim:

Kahi, Qasim was born at Miyankal, a mountainous village near Samarqand, and passed considerable time of his life in the city of Kabul. Impressed by his personality and genius, emperor Humayun enlisted him as his companion and court poet. For the same reason, he was treated with much respect by Akbar. Kahi lived upto unusually long age of over a hundred and ten years and established his reputation among the leading literary men of the times. His experiences of Human diversities, accumulated through such a wide range of space and time, made him a latitudinarian of quit open mind. His contemporaries, particularly, the old fashioned fanatics, were battled by his strange character. Badauni, the historian, gave free rein to his disgust:

“These two have shared the entire world’s wickedness half and half between them.”

The other was Ghazali, the poet – laureate of Akbar. Supposed to be the longest surviving disciple of the poet – saint, Jami of Herat, he had been welcome to all and everybody felt surprised by his exuberant cheerfulness and simplicity. His Diwan of verses has survived.

Nuruddin Nuri

Nuruddin Nuri was a noble man and poet living at the court of Humayun, who conferred on him the title of “Tarkhan” for he was the emperor’s boon – companion and enjoyed the privilege of free access to him, particularly, when Humayun lived as an exile in Kabul. Once offended by Tatar Khan, governor of Delhi, he ridiculed the city and its people in a length satire, using the rhyme and metre of the great poet Jami, and of course, scandalizing the name of his old rival, Qasim – i – Kahi, for its authorship. In old age, Akbar appointed him custodian of Humayun’s mausoleum. He collected his Diwan of verses in his own lifetime.

AKBAR THE GREAT (1556 – 1605 A.D)

“Akbar ‘The Akbar Great’ was one of the greatest rulers in Indian history. He was born when Humayun and his wife were fugitives escaping towards Persia. Raised in the country of Afghanistan rather than amongst the splendour of the Delhi court, he spent his youth learning to hunt, run and fight and never found time to read or write. He was the only great Mughal ruler who was illiterate. Despite this he had a great desire for knowledge. This led him not only to maintain an extensive library but also to learn. Akbar had his books read out to him by his courtiers. Therefore, even though unable to read Akbar was as knowledgeable as the most learned of scholars. He retained 59 poets at his court and would generously pay them for any poem he liked.

He came to throne when he was 13 years old. During first five years of his rule Akbar was assisted and advised by Bairam Khan in running the affairs of the country. After 1562, Akbar freed himself from external influences and ruled supreme.

Akbar was a great patron of poets, local and from Persia, he knew the Divan of Hafiz probably by heart would often quote him and other mystical poets and composed ruba'is and ghazals. Akbar had three sons Prince Salim, Murad and Daniyal. Prince Murad and Daniyal died in their prime during their father's lifetime. However, Akbar faced problems with Prince Salim and the last four years of Akbar's life were consumed in crushing Salim's rebellion. Akbar fell ill and died of slow poisoning. With him ended one of the most glorious epochs in Indian history.”²⁴

On 5th November, 1556 Himu's army met Akbar at Panipat in a fierce battle. Himu drove back the Mughal archers and cavalry and was about to win the day by bringing in his war elephant and reserve cavalry to scatter Akbar's centre, when an arrow pierced his eye. Consternation spread instability among Himu's army which broke and fled. Later, when Himu was brought before him as a prisoner, at Bairam Khan's request Akbar unwilling struck him on the neck with his sword, and Bairam finished him off.

After Himu's death, Akbar entered Delhi in triumph. Before long his rule was established from Kabul to Jaunpur and from the Punjab hills to Ajmir. Bairam appointed a distinguished Iranian literary scholar. Abdul latif used to write as Akbar's interest in reading and writing. Even so, Akbar's taste in Persian sufi poetry and liberal mystic thought was developed, although he devoted most of his time to sport. “While he remained what Abdul Fazl calls behind a veil, Bairam Khan, as regent and prime minister, consolidated the administration of the reconquered region. His

growing predominance alienated the Atkah Khoil or faster-father battalion while Akbar's mother resented Bairam's power. Akbar too was made to feel that Bairam unduly restrained him from organising elephant fight. By 1560 he was eighteen years old and wished to rule independently.”²⁵

The experimenting of novel ideas during the reign of Akbar fairly influenced the quality of literature, specially, poetry of the period. It was the age of universal renaissance, which awakened the minds of the people in many parts of the world, both in the east and the west. After Maulana Jami's death in Herat (898/1492), the intellectual activity inaugurated by the descendants of Timur had lost its vigour. A fresh environment for the flourishing of art and literature was provided by the India of Akbar. From his time the Mughal court became the centre of gravity to attract talents from central Asia and Iran.

Time decreed unique advantage to Akbar: he ruled for fifty years. Another lucky factor was the presence of a large number of exceptionally brilliant men around him.

In the realm of literature, the outstanding characteristic of Akbar's period was the abundance of sophistication found among the writers. They were invariably mature scholar and displayed rare degree of intellectual competence in writing both prose and poetry. Although superiority of poetry over prose was obvious, none the less every prose work of the period was a specimen of flawless expression. The correct choice of vocabulary at the command of the writers left no doubt about their ability to communicate in easy manner. From the number of books covering various fields of knowledge we may estimate their enthusiasm for writing. The Mughal emperors and their nobles paid unusually high regards to men of letters. Besides the poets, who

enjoyed perfect liberty in their company, scholar of all disciplines were eagerly welcomed by them. That peculiar habit of the ruling classes was responsible for generating confidence among the writers and raising the standard of their works.

Akbar reign witnessed a brilliant age in the history of Indo - Persian literature. Though technically illiterate, Akbar possessed a scholarly taste and his enthusiastic patronage attracted to his court the best talents not only from every corner of India, but also from every part of Iran. This was especially so in the field of poetry. Badayuni gives brief accounts of the lives and samples of political compositions of one hundred and sixty-eight poets who lived at the imperial court or flourished in the different parts of empire, while while Abul Fazl enumerates fifty nine poets , both native and foreigner, who enjoyed Akbar's patronage. The contemporary safawid rulers were not even half as generous as Akbar to men of letters and poets.

In a society where monarchs and princes liked to be poets themselves, it was nature that poetry became the queen of all arts and the poet establishment his position as ideal gentleman. During Akbar's reign most of the poets were Iranian emigrants. Luck favoured them when they left their land of birth. The Mughal court had acquired the prestige of an academy. Reward apart, the visit amounted to attaining a qualification. They came in order to polish their talents and get them recognised amongst the contemporaries. Never in history were the poets given so much encouragement. A number of them were weighed in silver for a single verse. Akbar set the example and his successors followed to reward the poets with their body-weight of silver as inheritors to ghazal over all other forms of poetry. Their genius chiefly unfolded itself in that field and through their efforts ghazal attained perfect charm. Its free development became the symbol of the age.

From the Nafais ul – Ma’asir of Mir ‘Ala ud – Dawlah Qazwini, the historian, Badauni borrowed one hundred sixty seven poets to be mentioned in his history. Shaikh Abul Fazl confined his account to fifty nine poets in the A’in – i – Akbari and added that thousand of them continually visited the emperor’s court and returned with lavish rewards. In short, “puns, chronograms, satires, similes and original concepts constituted the salient merits of Mughal poetry.

Akbar’s court was blessed by the famous poet and scholars like –

- a) Ghazali Mashhadi
- b) Qasim – i – Arsalan
- c) Qasim – i – Kahi
- d) Ashki Qummi
- e) Baqi Kaulabi, Hayat Jan
- f) Bahram Saqqa, Shah Birdi Bayat
- g) Fida’i Rustam Mirza Safawi
- h) Hairati Taqiud – Din
- i) Gina’i Shams un – Din Muhammad
- j) Mazahari Kashmiri
- k) Maili Harawi, Muhammad Quli
- l) Nawedi
- m) Raha’i Shaikh Sa’d ud – Din Khwafi
- n) Ulfati Yazdi
- o) Urfi, Jamal – ud – Din Muhammad
- p) Talib Isfahani
- q) Rafi, Mir Haidar Muamma’i
- r) Shuja’i Saiful – Muluk

- s) Khwaja Hussain Sana'i
- t) Muhammad Riza Shikebi Isfahani
- u) Muhammad Hussain Naziri
- v) Hayati Gilani

Ghazali Mushhadi :

Ghazali Mushhadi, the first poet laureate of Akbar's court, proved a very talented poet with his mathnavis, such as Mashhad-i-Anwar, the Mirat al-Sifat, Naqsh-i-Badii, Qudrat-i- Athar and a Diwan, entitled Athar al-Shabad, an anthology of poems dedicated to Akbar."²⁶ He was born at Mashad in 1526-27 A.D and died at Ahmadabad on 3rd December 1572 A.D. He was the poet-laureate at the court of Mughal emperor Akbar, the great. The information regarding his family background and early age is unknown. During his youth he went to Qazwin and joined the court of Shah Tahmasp for sometimes. He also visited Tabriz and Kirman. Due to his liberal thinking and dispute with shah of Shiraz he had left Iran for India. He reached Deccan where he received warm welcome and patronage from the Governor of Jaunpur. Ghazali Mushhadi had come to the Deccan, but his poetic talents were not properly recognised there. So he was called from the Deccan to Jaunpur by Khan – i – Zaman who was the imperial governor there. At Jaunpur he was treated generously. He became a fast friend of Moulana Qasim Kahi who also adored Khan – i – Zaman's court.

When Akbar captured Jaunpur among others Ghazali also came under his service. He successfully attracted Akbar's attention through a Diwan dedicated to the name of Akbar. He also attracted the attention of some dignitaries in the Akbar's court and finally Akbar appointed him as the first poet-laureate of his court in 1567 A.D. Thereafter he had been living a life of comfortable and materialistic well being

until his death in 1572. He was buried in Ahmadabad at Sarkhej in the cemetery reserved for princess and other men of rank. His relation with the fellow poets was not always so good. However, he was engaged in poetical altercations with his contemporaries, exchanging insult both in Persia and India. But he maintain a good relation with Faizi Dakani who succeeded him as the poet-laureate as Akbar's court.

Ghazali joined service under Emperor Akbar and was soon elevated to the title of *Malik – ush – Shubra*. He died suddenly in Ahmadabad on Friday, 27 Rajab 980/3 December 1572 and was buried in sarkhey. According to Abul Fazl "He was unrivalled in depth of understanding and sweetness of language, and was well acquainted with the noble thoughts of the sufie's."²⁷ He left behind nearly 50,000 verses"²⁸ to 100000 couplets. His Diwan preserved in the British Library contains around 12000 couplets including *qasidas, ghazals, masnavis, qitas, tarkib band and tarsi banda*. His qasidas are not confined to eulogies of rulers and nobles, but treat other subjects as well, including praise of God and the prophets, mysticism, and personal experience and observations.

His ghazals deal with mystical and philosophical themes. They are characterized by sensitivity of feeling and felicity of expression. His most important *masnavi* is *Naqs-e-badi*, a mystical poem of about one thousand couplets composed after the model of Nizami's "*Makzan al asrar*". According to Haft aqlim vol-ii p. 212, it was composed while the poet was working for Khan-e- Zaman, but he may have begun working on it earlier, since its prologue contains a qasida addressed to Shah Tahmasb.

It is said that Khan-e-Zaman rewarded Ghazali with one gold coin for each of its couplets. Ghazali was a poet of great merit and distinction, whom Abul Fazal Allami in his "*Ain-i-Akbari*" praises as "unrivalled in depth of understanding and

sweetness of language” and Badauni in his book “*Muntakhab ul Tawarikh*” with some reservations, regards his poem as “superior to those of any of his contemporaries”. According to Zabin-Allah Safa, Ghazali was “a poet seldom equaled by anyone during the entire 10th/16th century.

A few samples of his lyrical poetry and quatrains which are chaste and sublime are cited below –

شوری شد و از خواب عدم دیده کشیدیم
دیدیم که باقیست شب فتنه غنودیم
ماز مرگ خود نمی ترسیم اما این بلاست
کز تماشایی بتان محروم باید شدن
خفتگان خاک یکسر کشته تیغ تواند
هیچ دخلی نیست شمشیر اجل را در میان
شده زه بر کمان قامت زاهد ردای او
ولی رندان نمی ترسند از تیر دعای او

(I heard a noise and opened my eyes from the sleep of nothingness. I saw that the night of strife had not passed away and feel asleep again.)

(Those who are at rest in the dust were all slain by your sword, not by the sword of death)

(The zealot's cloak is stretched over his bent body like a string on a bow, but the wine-bibbers do not fear his arrows of prayers against them.)”²⁹

Ghazali's rubais are rated in high order. For example:--

(a)

If you are in the Kaaba but heart is not, prayers be

Useless,

Being there's as trifling as being in a monastery..

Useless!

But, if while in winehouse, your heart is fixed on God, you

You will be blessed in the next life, drink wine, worry...

Useless!

(b)

How long ask who is fortunate and who is not fortunate?

How long ask who enjoyed life, who found it didn't rate?

All this is nothing but a made-up tale, every leaves...

Why be making excuses like this, death is everyone's fate!

In one of his masnavi Ghazali the poet-laureate complains that when he was not in Akbar's service he was better off as he had been recently deprived of half of his grant of land and his horse was so old it had become a liability. Some lines from that masnavi are quoted here:-

Your majesty, it is now nearly three years on...

Since it was the talk of every Turk and Persian,

That...Ghazali has from Akbar been receiving

Patronage, encouragement... payment, coming.

Then, when the news of this reached to all my

Friends, family, relatives, greed drew them night!

In the past my condition was not bad I can say;

Mirza Muhammad Quli Maili

Mirza Muhammad Quli Maili was born and educated at Herat and turned into a distinguished poet with the Pen name Maili. He came to India and entered the services of Naurang Khan, who was the son of Qutubuddin Khan Atka, held a mensab

of 4,000 and was governor of Malwa. Maili visited the imperial court at Fatehpur Sikri and was rewarded by the emperor for his qasida. His Diwan of verses has survived. Maili counted among the high ranking poets during the early twenty years of Akbar's reign. Badauni calls him a genius. No doubt maili's ghazals are chaste and touch one's finer senses.”³⁰ Some specimens of his verses are cited here –

منی و دل فگاری بتو سپارم اورا
 بچہ کار خواهد آمد کہ نگاہ دارم اورا
 تو اگر قبول داری بہمین خوشست میلی
 کہ بر آستانہٗ تو ز سگان شمارم اورا^۱

(I part with my wonder heart in your favour; do with it as you wish, I have no more anything to do with it.

If you accept it, I shall be happy to count it among the dogs at your door.)

Saiyid Najmuddin Muhammad Abul Qasim Kahi:

Qasim – i – Kahi is more popular referred to as Maulana Qasim Kahi. He was born near Bukhara, passed his early life in Kabul and in 1533 came to India. Impressed by his personality and genius, the comparer Humayun enlisted him as his companion and court-poet. For the same reason he was treated with much respect by Akbar. Kahi lived up to unusually long age of over a hundred and ten years and established his reputation among the leading literary men of the times. He was a distinguished poet and composed verses under the Pen-name Kahi. His poetry is fresh both in diction and content.”³¹

A few verses are presented here:

چون سایه همرهیم بهر سوروان شوی
باشد که رفته رفته بما مهربان شوی
ای پیر عشق صحبت یوسف رخی طلب
بنود عجب که همچو زلیخا جوان شوی
ایرو نبود آنه که بران روی جوسیم است
بر صفحه خورشید هلالی بدونیم است
گوی که هوا از چه سبب غالیه بوشد
افتاده سر زلف تو در دست نسیم است

Wherever you go, I follow you like your shadow in the hope that in time you may become kind to me.

O experienced one in love, seek the company of one with Joseph's cheek. (If you do so), you may reign your youth like Zulekha.)

(The eye – brows on your silvery face like the crescent split into two on the surface of the sun.)

(The air is pregnant with strong fragrance because it is in touch with your tresses)

Khwaja Hussain Sana'i

Khwaja Hussain Sana'i was the son of a cloth merchant. He was born and brought up at Masshad. Having earned, displeasure from Shah Ismail – 11 (1576 – 87), he came to Akbar's court and he was warmly received. According to Abul Fazl his manners were simple and pure.³² He was counted among the greatest poets attached to Akbar's court and according to Badayuni, his Diwan was very popular among his contemporaries and was readily available in the market.³³ He died in Lahor in 1586. His ghazals are ever fresh. A few samples of his lyrical verses are cited below –

چنین کز ناز آن طنز خوش رفتار می آ
 مرا نظاره کردن در رخس دشوار می آ
 نخواهم چشم بردارم زو با آنکه می دا
 کزان دیدن مرا بر سر بلا بسیار می آ
 در تنم باد صبا جان آورده
 بوی پیراهن جانان آورد

The sportive beauty walks so fast that I find it different to focus my eyes on her face.

I cannot take my eyes off her, although I know it will bring me much calamity.

My body gains life from the fragrance of the beloved's dress which the breeze carries to me.)

Jamaluddin Muhammad Urfi Shirazi:

Sayed Jamaluddin Muhammad widely known as Urfi was born in 1555 at Shiraz. He derived his penname from the term Urf given to the secular or non religious department in Persian. One of which his father Zainud – din Alawr, had been occupied. When Urfi came to India he reached Fatehpur Sikri where he presented himself, Faizi who received him cordially treated him with all possible kindness and favour. For some time Urfi linked under his patronage but he could not stay there for long and soon after he was attached to Hakim Amir. Abul Fatch Gilani, the letter held high rank in the court of Akbar himself being a great scholar of oriented language, he entertained at his court as many eminent poets and writers as possible. He came to India at the beginning of his poetic career and stayed with several nobles, such as Faizi, Hakim Abdul Fath Gitani and Abdur Rahim Khan – i – Khanan. It was the Khan – i – Khanan who introduced him to Emperor Akbar. Urfi was a highly talented poet, his style and diction marked the choicest and the finest Jewel – work of

fastidious artist. His Diwan was readily available in any book shop. Unfortunately, he was not destined to live long. He died of poisoning in 1591 when he was just thirty six years of age.

Akbar said to Urfi, “*O, Urfi, and Live cheerful with all men, bad and good. When dead, let the muslims wash thee with the holy water of Zamzam, and let the Hindus consign thy body to flame.*”³⁴ He was first buried in Lahore, but nearly thirty years later his remains were carried to and reinterred at Najar Sharif. According to Abul Fazl, just on the eve his death Urfi composed the following quatrain –

عرفی دم نزاع است و همان مستی تو
آخر بجه مایه رخت بریستی تو
فرداست که دوست نقد فردوس بکف
جویای متاعست و تهی دستی تو
قصیده کار طمع پیشگاه بود عرفی
تواز قبیلہ عشقی و ظیفہ ات غزل است

(*Urfi! You are dying, yet you are carefree; on what account are you depending? Tomorrow, when the Friend offers paradise in return for a price (good deeds, What will you show?)*)”³⁵

Though essentially a qasida writer, he himself declared that ghazal was first love:

قصیده کار طمع پیشگاه بود عرفی
تواز قبیلۀ عشقی و وظیفه ات غزل است

گرفتم آن که بهشتم دهند بی طاعت
قبول کردن و رفتن نه شرط انصاف است
بلوچ مشهد پروانه این رقم دیدم
که آتشی که مرا سوخت خویش را هم سوخت
کفران نعمت گله مندان بی ادب
در کیش من ز شکر گدایانه خوشتر است
هرگز مگو که کعبه ز بتخانه خوشتر است
هرجا که هست جلوۀ جانانه خوشتر است
خواهی بکعبه رو کن و خواهی بسوینات
دل بد مکن که شش جهت از بهر طاعتست
زرد عذر چه غم گر جزا بود ترسم
که عذر مانپذیرند و جرمها بخشند

*(Qasida writing is the profession of the greedy. 'Urfi, you belong to the tribe of lovers, your field is, therefore, ghazal)."*³⁶

(Suppose paradise were offered without my having earned it; it would not be fair to accept it as a gift)

(The tomb-stone on the grave of the moth read: "the fire that burnt me, burnt itself too.")

(In my creed, a defferent rejection of a favour is better than accepting and expressing a beggarly gratefulness for it.

Do not hold the Ka'ba in a higher esteem than the idol-temple, because the Beloved resides in both of them).

(It makes no difference whether you worship Him facing the Ka'ba or the temple. The north, south, east, west, heaven and earth—all belong to Him and one can choose any direction for his prayer.)

(I am afraid that on the day of reckoning, my excuses for my crimes may be rejected and yet I may be forgiven)

دعای بی اثری دارم و هزاران جرم
مگر مرا بتهی دستی دعا بخشند
عرفی بروا از میکده ما که کس اینجا
به زخم دل و چاک گریبان نه نشیند

(Having committed sins beyond count, my prayers are not answered. May be, taking pity on my utter helplessness God pardons me)

(Urfi, leave our taren, because only those are allowed to sit here, who have their collars torn and their hearts wounded in love)

Urfi cherished love for the prince salim. However he was poisoned by someone who caused his death of an early age of thirty six in 1591 A.D. He buried in Nozat – i – Ashat where Hazarat Ali (Peace be on him) was attained nearly by chance. It is also happened that once long after his death a dervish came in Lahore and mistaking the grave of Urfi for one of his brother dug in to open and taken out the bones of Urfi and went to Nazaf – i – Ashraf where he buried those bones near the shrine of Hazarat Ali (peace be on him).

Despite dying young, Urfi had a great impaction his contemporaries through the force of both his personality and his poetry. He was hypersensitive, quick to take offense and respond to any taunt with a ready wit a sharp tongue. E.G Brown in his book Literary History of Persia mentioned that “One day Urfi finds his sponsor, Faizi, holding puppy and asks the name of the “young master” when Faizi answers “Urfi”, Urfi replies, “Mobarak Basad” both offering his congratulations on the new pet and

suggested that Faizi ought to name it after his father, Shekh Mobarak. Even his most sympathetic biographer, Abd-al-Baqi of Nahavand, remarks on Urfi's open disregard for the standard protocol and etiquette of the Mughal court. Urfi Shirazi often used to declare that his poetry to be superior not only to that of his contemporaries, but also unrivalled by the greatest poets of the past, such as Kaqani, Anwari and Nizami. The author of *Tabakat-e-Akbari* suggested that this egotism of Urfi was the cause of the poet's premature demise. Even it was found that Urfi offended many of his fellow poets. However exaggerated Urfi's lofty estimation of his own talents, his claims were not unfounded. His poetry enjoyed great popularity in his life time through out the Persian-speaking world. E.J.W Gibb remarks on Urfi formative influence on Ottoman Turkish poetry as well. Awhadi of Balyan and Abd-al Baqi of Nahavand identify "Urfi as the "inventor of the "*taza-e-taza*". No single poet can justly be given credit for the emergence of the "fresh" or Indian" style. Urfi played a crucial role in the move away from the colloquial diction and realist aesthetics of the maktab-e-woqu and toward a new valuation of conceptual subtlety and imagistic complexity. Among the Urfi's works his qasidas have met with special critical acclaim. Though a few of these are addressed to Urfi's early Safavid patrons, most date from his career in India and are dedicated to Abul Fateh of Gilan, Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khanan, Prince Salim and Akbar. Urfi also wrote a number of devotional qasidas on the Prophet Muhammad and Imam Ali, including his single longest work in this genre, entitled *Tarjomat al sawq*. Anna Livia Beelaert analyzes this poem as an example of thematic genre of the *sowgand-nama* and a creative imitation of an earlier panegyric by Kamal al-din of Isfahan. Urfi also wrote responses to the recognized masters of the genre such as Khaqani and Anwari. Like these poets Urfi often makes learned allusion to

such fields as logic and medicine, inspiring in India a series of commentaries on his qasidas.

Urfi's style

As regards Urfi's style it is admitted on all hand that he had a complete mastery over almost all kinds of Persian poetry. He always exceeded all over poets of his time, whenever he entered the list of poetry writing of all one various kinds of poetry Urfi was deficient in writing Masnavi.

It was qasida and ghazal that won him such worldwide reputation. He introduced new and original construction and style by his qasidas in a Persian poetry which never been used by his predecessors, contributed very much towards the establishment of Persian language and literature. His style in the qasida has been praised for its measured, yet fluent diction, continuity of theme over extended passages, the coinage of new metaphorical compounds, and innovative comparisons. His mastery of the qasida has perhaps unjustly overshadowed his ghazals, which at their best demonstrate a powerful command of language and subtlety of thought and imagery. Urfi's real strength, however, is in his handling of philosophical and gnostic themes. His Diwan also contains a few tarkib and tarjibands and several dozen qetas mostly on courtly themes as well as a couple of hundred rubai's.

Urfi begun work on a Khamsa on the model of Nezami, but he died before bringing even one of the five projected masnavis to completion. He finished a little over 1400 verses of Majma-ul Akbar, which consists of ethical and didactic tales in a Sufi mode. Only four hundred verses of the introductory section of his Farhad-o-Sirin survive. Besides over scattered rhymed couplets, Urfi did complete short *saqi nama*, a genre much in vogue at the time. Urfi's interest in Sufism is again apparent in his

short prose work entitled Resala-i-nafsiya. Finally, samples of his personal correspondence and other prose jotting have been gleaned from manuscript miscellanies and some copies of his Diwan.

It is generally believed that the verse, which is inscribed in the Diwan-i-Khas of the Red Fort in Delhi, was composed by Urfi when he went to Kashmir and eulogized the sylvan beauty of the valley. The verse is:

Gar firdous bar ru-i-zamin ast

Hami ast o, hami ast o, hamin ast!

(If there is paradise on the face of the earth

*It is this, it is this, it is this)"*³⁷

In another beautiful poet Urfi praises the beauty of Kashmir as follows:

(Each and every grieved soul that comes to Kashmir becomes happy, even if the bird of roasted plunage (wings) comes out from its body)." ³⁸

Two main feature of his style are briefly summed up here –

j) High stansing words nill arrangement consice from lofty ideas, loan large in the poems Urfi.

ii) Urfi has used new arrangement and combination of words which helped to express one thought more explicitly and adequately.

Hairati, Taqi ud – Din:

Hairati, Taqi ud – Din witness the time and enjoyed the patronage of Shah Tahmasp Safawi of Iran. He immigrated to India and was enlisted among the court poets of Akbar. As the emperor was going to Kashmir, death overtook the poet along the way. His Diwan of verses has survived.

Ulfati Yazdi:

Ulfati Yazdi came from Yazd, Iran, in Akbar's time and lived under the patronage of Khan – i – Zaman, the governor of Jaunpur. After his patron's rebellion was crushed, all his servants, including Ulfati, were arrested. The emperor granted him pardon.

Talib Isfahani:

Talib Isfahani came from his home town Isfahan and settled in Kashmir. When Akbar annexed that province, he was taken into the service of the Mughal government. The emperor sent him to Tibet for obtaining information about the region. Talib visited the country of the Lamas and submitted a detailed report to Shaikh Abu'l Fazl, who incorporated relevant portions of it into his Akbar – namah. All Tazkirah writers have mentioned the name of Talib among the poets of Akbar's reign.

JAHANGIR

“Jahangir, the Mughal emperor ascended the throne after the death of his father Akbar”,³⁹ and he assumed the title of Nurud – Din – Muhammad Jahangir.

“Jahangir the Mughal emperor was born on September 20th, 1569 succeeded to the throne a week after the death of his father Akbar. The coronation of Salim took place on 3 November, 1605 A.D. In his memoirs he explains that he assumed the new name of Jahangir (Holder of the world) because the business of kings is to control the world and the title of Nuruddin (Light of the faith) because he took his seat on the throne shortly after Sunrise and also because this title had been foretold by sages.”⁴⁰

Jahangir the Mughal emperor, born on September 20th, 1569, succeeded to the throne a week after the death of his father Akbar. The coronation of Salim took place on 3 November, 1605 A.D and he assumed the title of Nur – ud – din Muhammad Jahangir. Like Akbar, Jahangir managed diplomatic relations on the Indian subcontinent detourously, was tolerant of non-muslims, and was a great patron of the art. Jahangir was well educated and cultured person. He had good command over Persian and Turki language and was well versed in other languages as well like Hindi and Arabic. He wrote his autobiography entitled Tuzuk – i – Jahangir himself for seventeen year and later on got it prepared by others under his personal guidance. The description is fairly creditable and proves that Jahangir had only varied interests but also knowledge of different subjects and fine arts. Jahangir was keenly interested in painting which reached to its Zenith of progress during his rule.

Art and literature flourished in the same fashion throughout this period as they had captivated popular attention during half a century in the past. The enrichment of intellectual life due to the influx of foreign talents, mostly from Iran, continued without decreasing. In real spirit, the literary traditions of former days survived intact. As such, ghazal reserved the privilege of determining poetic genius. Naziri Nishapuri continued to enjoy the reputation of most outstanding poet during Jahangir's period. The emperor invited him for a personal meeting and honoured with cash reward. Similarly, Jahangir did not forget to mention his poet laureate, Talib – i – Amuli. These two entries in the Tuzuk reflected the general taste of the educated classes. Jahangir laid down a unique custom in history. He ordered the poets and masters of other disciplines to be weighed in silver. Hayati Gilani stood first in the reckoning. The date came out from the chronogram: Sha'ir-i-Sanj ideah-i-Shahi, ragam zad rozgar

1019/1610. In response to Jahangir's wish, the poet had completed the lost portion of Amir Khusraw's historical masnawi, Tughlag Namah.

As regards the forms of versification, Persian poetry invented a number of fields and traversed the path of history divisible into three unequal periods. Every period became distinct for promoting a particular form of verse. For example, the earliest period, beginning from the Samanids of Bukhara, confined itself chiefly to qasidah or court poetry.

Jahangir was interested in architecture as well. The tomb of Akbar at Sikandrabad near Agra was constructed by him and it is one among the beautiful buildings created by the Mughal emperors. The mosque in Lahor, which was constructed in his reign, has been compared with the Jami Masjid, constructed by Shah Jahan, in Delhi. One of the most striking buildings constructed during his sovereignty, is the tomb of Itimad-ud-daula near Agra, which was constructed by Nur Jahan. Jahangir laid out many beautiful gardens in Kashmir and Lahore.

Tuzk-e-Jahangir or Tuzk-i-Jahangir is the autobiography of Mughal emperor Nur-u-Din Muhammad Jahangir (1569-1609), also referred to as Jahangir Nama. Tuzk-e-Jahangir is written in Persian, and follows the tradition of his great grandfather, Babur (1487-1530) who had written the Baburnama, though Jahangir went a step further and besides the history of his reign, he included details his reflections on art, politics, and also information about his family.

Jahangir was a good poet and lived nature. Jahangir recorded detailed description about wildlife in his autobiography. Jahangir admired paintings and collected them in his place. Many of them survived and are found in Museums around the world.

Jahangir's health was adversely affected due to excessive drinking of alcohol. Jahangir died in the year 1627, while returning from Kashmir, the region of Sarai Saadabad. His deceased body was buried in Shahdara Bagh, in Lahore. He was succeeded by his son prince Khurram, also known as Shah Jahan.

Some important poets and scholar of Jahangir's court are like :

Nur Jahan

Nur Jahan : was the daughter of Mirza Ghiyas Beg I'timad ud-daulah and sister of Abdul Hasan Asaf Khan, the prime ministers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan respectively. Initially, her wedding took place with Sher Afghan Khan, an Iranian noble of ordinary rank posted in Bengal. By deliberate mischief or mere accident, young Sher Afghan was slain in a violent scuffle with the provincial governor (10016-1607). Fortune smiled on the young widow. For, in less than four years, she entered Jahangir's harem as chief queen and took in her hands the control of the empire. Coins were struck in her name and imperial firmars bore her signature. As regards her last days, popular memory has preserved a strikingly romantic episode that depicted her true character, of course. From her retreat in Lahore, she wrote to her ruling step son Shah Jahan, expressing the last wish a place for the grave. The shadow of her husband's tomb should everfall on it. It will be a memorial to posterity of a woman's selfless devotion: possessing creative imagination and cultivated taste, Nur Jahan Begum, through her story verses, left a claim upon the writers of anthologies to include her name in their accounts."⁴¹

FARAIBI, MIR 'ABDULLAH MIZEH :

He was a poet settled in Kashmir during Jahangir's time. Abd un-Nabi Fakhr uz- Zamani interviewed him while collecting material for the Mai-Khanah: Faraibi

was happy in his homeland and had not paid attention yet, to collect his Diwan (1025-1616)

ADA'I, MIR MAU'MIN

He lived in Surat, Gujrat during the reign of Jahangir. He fled from his hometown where he was accused of atheism and found his life in danger. Initially, his patron was Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, king of Golconda. In India he developed the image of pious man devoted to prayers and fasting, and made himself popular as poet.

TALIB AMULI

Sayyed Mohammad Talib-i-Amuli started his career as a poet in his teens, composing praise poems to notables in his hometown of Amul in Mazandaran in northern Iran near the Caspian Sea.”⁴² Sayyed Mohammad, (1587-1626) Persian poet of the early 17th century. A precocious talent, Talib embarked on his literary career in his late teens, composing praise poems to notables in his native Mazandaran and gazals under the penname Asud. Beginning a lifetime of constant travel, he soon sought to further his court in the major literary centers of Persia. In Kashan his maternal uncle held a prominent position as court physician to Shah Tahmasp I, and Talib began a life-long friendship with his cousin and fellow-poet Hakim Ruk-un Din Masip. During a brief stay in Isfahan, Talib wrote two qasidas in honour of Shah Abbas I, when these failed to win him entry into the Safavid court, he moved to Marv, where he found a patron in the provincial governor around 1606.

“He came to India as a young man during the reign of Jahangir.”⁴³ He emigrated from Amul, a small town in the south of Caspian Sea, and soon established his position as literary genius of the age. Before joining the imperial court he had enjoyed the patronage of several nobles, the most important of them being Mirza

Ghazi Beg Tar Khen Waqari, the imperial governor of Qandahar, and Irimad – ud – Daulah.

“This young and brilliant military commander was himself a capable poet under the penname Waqari, and under the direction of the poet Morsed of Borujerd, his court became an important transit station for the traffic of literary talent between India and Pakistan. After Mirza Gazi’s premature death in 1612 at the age of only twenty-five, Talib again spend several years roaming about northern India. During his first appearance before Jahangir, Talib was left speechless by way and the opium that he had taken beforehand to calm his nerves, but he gradually worked his way back to the imperial court through his service with Mughal generals such as Qalis Khan in Surat and Firoz Jang in Gujrat. However, it was a chance meeting in Lahore with the poet Sapur of Tehran and an introduction to his uncle Khwaja Giyasuddin Md. E’temad al Dowla that opened Talib’s path to the Emperor’s inner circle. With the support of his influential administrator, Talib entered Jahangir’s service about 1616 and was appointed to the poet laureate in January, 1620.”⁴⁴

For the next several years, Talib accompanied Jahangir on his frequent journeys through his domains. However, the poet apparently suffered from a mental infirmity during the final years of his life, and the circumstances of his death are unclear. When he died in 1626-7, he left two young daughters orphans. They were adopted by his nelder sister Sati-al Nesa, with whom he shared a deep affection throughout his life.

By most reports, Talib was an amiable man who avoided the bitter personal rivalries that often flared up among the poets of Mughal India. His contemporary Fakr-al-Zamani of Qazvin reports that the poet was “good-natured and affable” and

Awhadi of Balyani, who met Talib in both Isfahan and Ajmir, praises his “joyous” and industrious temperament. Such personal qualities help explain the ease with which Talib moved between patron and his prolificacy. Although it is uncertain when his works were first collected, full manuscripts of his diwan date from only a few years after his death, and many contain well over 20,000 verses. His short masnavi, *Qazava qadar* tells the fantasy tale of a shipwrecked sailor marooned with beautiful woman on a desert isle. His other two works in rhymed couplets, also less than 500 verses long, were written for special occasions: one to leave from Bektas Khan in Merv and the other to celebrate an outdoor banquet held by Jahangir. Over seventy qasidas and dozens of short qitas provide a full; and fascinating record of his professional life as courtier and panegyrist. Like other poets rose in Safavid Persia, Talib dedicated a number of devotional poems to the Shiite Imams. His strophic poems appear to date from early in his career and cover a similar range of topics. However, by far the greatest portion of his divwan consists of ghazals-some 1750 in number and it is these lyric poems that are largely the basis of his later critical reception.

Though most contemporaries gave fulsome praise to Talib’s originality and creativity, a dissenting voice seems to have had the greatest Impact on modern scholarship. Monir of Lahor reports meeting Talib and asking him about an obscure verse from the notoriously difficult 12th century poet Khaqani, when Monir laughed out loud at the poet’s absurd explication, Talib rejoined, “In India, they only study such verses, while I can write them with my toenails”. Not surprisingly, Talib is a prime target of Monir’s attack on the “fresh style” of contemporary poetry in his *Karnama* though ali Khan Arzu mounted a vigorous defense of Talib a century later,

this anecdote was given new life in an early 18th century collective biography of poets Makzanal-garaib, and found its way into modern criticism through Sebli-Numni and Talib's Editor, Taheri Sehab. Talib enjoys the dubious distinction of being deemed a "natural genius" whose technical acumen sometimes failed to match the exuberance of his imagination. Even sympathetic modern biographers feel obliged to include a sampling of the poet's "incomprehensible" verses, the broader and more representative selections from Talib's ghazals by Qahraman and Abd al Rasid Kaja give a far more positive impression of the poet's range and capability.

Talib played a crucial role in the rapid transformation of poetic style at the beginning of the 17th century. His work gave free rein to the tendency towards contuaptualism in the "free style" that had begun to emerge a generation earlier in the poetry of Naziri and Urfi. Like them, Talib showed his debt to the past by responding to poems by renowned predecessors such as Kaqani in the qasida and Sadi, Amir Khusraw and Hafiz in ghazal. At the same time he gives a new vitality to conventional images and common idioms by exploring their full figurative implications. His elaboration of two unobtrusive metaphors of everyday speech offers a small indication of how his imagination works. He revives the dead metaphor of "the house of religious law" in a single long noun phrase that exposes the spiritual ruin behind a sartorial façade of clerical ostentation.

"His poetic style was simple but captivating. He was very fond of using similes and metaphors in his poetry which easily distinguished him from his contemporaries. It was Itimad – ud – Daulah who introduced him to Emperor Jahangir, who impressed by his unique poetic excellence, appointed him the poet-

laureate in January, 1619. His time is called as ‘the spiring season of Persian poetry in India.’⁴⁵ He died in 1626 and was buried outside Lahore.

Some specimens of his lyrical verses and a quatrain are cited below:

در شناسائی مکن تعجیل طالب زانکه من
هر کز کافر گمان بردم مسلمان یافتم
از بس یتان که در دل من خانه کرده اند
بیتوان دلیر گفتم که بیت الصنم منم
راحت طلبیدم ز جهان دید پوشید
غم خواستم از دهر به خروار فرستاد
افروختن و سوختن و جامه دریدن
پروانه ز من شمع ز من گل ز من آموخت
ز جوش اهل ریا باب کعبه مسدود است
بیا که وجد کنان در گه صنم پوئیم
طلب مکن مدد از ناخدا به کشتی عشق
خدا چو باتو رفیق است ناخدا چه کنی

(Talib, make no haste in passing your judgement about a person. Many a time I took one to be an infidel and he turned out to be a Muslim)

(So many beauties have taken residence in my heart that it may be called the idol – house)”⁴⁶

(I sought ease and comfort from the world, it shut its eyes; I asked for grief, it offered in abundance).

(It was from that the moth learnt self-immolation, the candle to burn itself and the rose to tear its garment.)

(Since the hypocrites in their enthusiasm have barred us from entering the Ka’ba, let us go dancing to the idol temple).

(Do not seek the sailor's help for rowing your love-boat; when you have God by your side, where is the need for a navigator?)

(The dust of the tavern emits fragrance of happiness, and possesses the medicine which can cure all my ailments. If you are acquainted with my heart, step into my eyes and repose there)

DUSTI SAMARQANDI

He was a scholar and poet during the reign of Jahangir. He had attained fame in Trans – oxiana before coming to India. Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang offered him hospitality and he passed many years with that nobleman till the latter was transferred from Agra as military commander of the Deccan affairs, 1025/1616. Then, prince khurram (Shah Jahan) invited him and the poet accepted the offer of the crown prince. The author of Mai-i-Khanah interviewed him in 1028/1618. Nihawandi reported that Maulana Dusti came over to the service of his master, Abdur Rahim Khan – i – Khanan and added that Dusti's qasidahs in his possession were lost, and that he would include them later on if they could be traced. The poet left a Diwan of eight thousand verses.”⁴⁷

GIRAMI HASAN BEG SHAMLU

He came from Iran in the reign of Jahangir and held high offices in Gujrat and Bengal in succession till the time of Shah Jahan. Girami was an acknowledged poet and left a Diwan of verses.

AHWALI

He came from his homeland, sistan, in the reign of Jahangir and passed his last days in Kashmir. Taqi Awhadi, the author of Arafatul-ashiqin, saw at Ajmer

(1024/1615). Two years later, Ahwali found permanent place at the court of Mirza Safdar Khan a nobleman of Chak connections, whose ancestors had been the rulers of Kashmir. Abdun – Nabi interviewed him there and obtained his poem for inclusion in the Mai – Khanah. The poem displayed Ahwali's field interest. For, as noted by Abdun – Nabi: "he composed mostly in praise of the Prophet and his family peace by upon them."⁴⁸

ANISI SHAMLU, YUL – QULI BEG

He lived in the literary circle of Abd ur –Rahim Khan – i – Khanan and was a friend of Naziri Nishapuri. Anisi inspired the modern poet, Iqbal to compose a poem in Urdu around the central idea supplied by Anisi's verse. His death occurred in Burhanpur, and he left, besides a Diwan of verses, the romantic poem in masnawi metre: Mahmud wa Ayaz.

ARIF EIGI, SIRAJ UD – DIN HUSAIN

He was a poet during the time of Akbar and Jahangir. Abd – un –Nabi, the author of Mai –Khanah, preserved a detailed account of his life. "I was born in Eig, the seat of the Shabankarah, between Yazd and Kirman, and my father was chief of the area. After his death, my elder brother did not treat me well and I left home. Overwhelmed by the desire to see the world, I came to India and presented a qasidah in praise of Prince Salim, son of Akbar, at Allahbad. Alas, jealous talebearers spoiled my case and told the price that I first served his brother, Prince Danyal. Price Salim ordered that I should be imprisoned in the fortress of Mandu, where I languished for two years. Then, I was pardoned and the Prince enlisted me as his courtier. But, I enjoyed wandering, and therefore, slipped away from Allahabad without seeking his permission. In Agra, I easily found a job among the legion of court – poets, and every

comfort was available to me for five years till the old emperor died. As my earlier patron succeeded his father, I avoided him in view of my past conduct and trotted away from Agra towards Deccan, where Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, the king of Golconda, received me kindly. Home – sickness being men’s natural weakness, in a few months I voyaged back to Iran. At home, family quarrels made my life hell in five years, and I found myself compelled to take road a second time to India via Qandhar. My hopes were not belied, and the emperor, Jahangir, may God grant him life till eternity, graciously accepted me in the circle of his praise – singers. Generally, I spend my regular salary and casual earnings in travelling across this vast country, and there must be hardly an important place on the map of India, which I have not seen. In the mean time, I was punctual to recite qasidahs before the Prime Minister, I’timad ud – Dawlah. Thanks to his generosity, I possess five hundred bighas of land here in Bihar. Now as you record my talk, I am fifty two years old, 1028/1618.” Similarly, Taqi Awhadi, also his friend, had noted down additional reminiscences in his tazkirah. Arif left a Diwan containing nine thousand verses, a didactic poem: Andwrz nameh, and a Saqi namah composed on Ferdowsi’s pattern.

KHAKI, HASAN BEG

He came from Shiraz and established his reputation as a poet during the days of Akbar and Jahangir. The emperors assigned him with important offices in Gujrat and Bihar respectively. He was the author of 1. a history for which he borrowed materials from Jahan Ara of Qazi Ahmad Ghatari (d 975/1567) and Tabaqat – i – Akbari of Nizam – ud – Din – Ahmad. Its double title was Muntakhab ut – Tawarikh /Ahsan ut – Tawarikh, 2. An incomplete tazkirah of poets written in collaboration with sufi Muzandrani Bul-khanah, and 3. A Diwan of verses.

KHISALI, MULLA HAIDAR

He came from the city of Herat in the reign of Jahangir and was initially offered hospitality by Mirza Muzaffar Hussain Safacoi, the poet imparted instruction to the nobleman's children. Thereafter, he served under Mahabat Khan, the military general for five years. In the reign of Shah Jahan, he was appointed chief revenue officer Diwan of Kashmir, where he stayed for a long time. Khisali's merits were calligraphy and poetry. His Diwan was popular among the contemporaries.

SHIKEBI

“Muhmmad Raza Shikebi Isfahani was educated in Isfahan and then Shiraz. In his early thirties he went to India and met Rahim who treated him so well he was able to go on pilgrimage to all the holy cities. After his return, for sometime he stayed with Rahim then travelled to Agra when he was introduced to Emperor Jahangir who acted favourably towards him who employed him.”⁴⁹

SHAH JAHAN

Shah Jahan, originally known as khurram, was borne at Lahore on 5 January, 1592 of Rajput princes Jagat Gosain daughter of Raja Udai Singh. He was the third and favourite son of the emperor Jahangir. The name *khurram* in Persian “for joyful” was given by his grandfather Akbar. Akbar tried to impart the best of education of khurram. However, khurram did not show that much in his studies as in military training and soon acquired mastery in the use of bow and arrow, swordsmanship and riding. At a very young age he earned the reputation of being a great commander. In view of the confilial conduct of his elder brother khusrau, Jahangir tried to train him as the future ruler. In 1607 he was appointed a mansabdar of 8000 zat and 5000

sawar. In 1608 Jahangir bestowed on him the Jagir of Hisar firoza which was generally bestowed on the successor to the throne.

Shah Jahan was a worthy successor of his father and under his active patronage the Mughal culture made striding progress in all respects.

Though personally he was not a poet although on occasion he could eminently extemporise, poetry attained a new height during his reign. "Shah Jahan was well educated and cultured. He provided protection to scholars. Persian and Sanskrit literature flourished during his reign.

Shah Jahan gave protection to scholars. Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi and other literatures developed during his reign. Jagannath Pandit, the author of Gangadhar and Ganga- Lahari, was his court-poet while poet Chintamani, Acharya Saraswati and Sundar Das received patronage from him. Literary works were produced in Persian language as well. Abdul Hamid Lahori wrote the Padshah-nama and Amin Qazwani wrote the Shahjahan-nama. Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan, was also a scholar of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. Many scholarly works of Sanskrit were translated into Persian under his patronage. Besides literature, progress was made in the fields of astrology, trigonometry, mathematics, etc. during the reign of Shah Jahan.”⁵⁰

Some important poets of Shah Jahan courts are like –

Kalim Hamdari

He was poet laureate at the court of Shah Jahan. Earlier, he had visited India during the time of Jahangir, and also, stayed for some time in the capital of Bijapur under the patronage of Ibrahim Adil Shah and his prime minister. Shah Nawaz Khan Shirazi Kalim earned his reputation for contributing to the development of the peculiar style of Ghazal, called by the Iranian critics as Sabki – i – Hindi. Scholar in

Iran traditionally held it as one of the three styles of their poetry, the other two being Sabk – i – Iraqi and Sabk – I – Khurasani in order of time. The Sabk – i – Hindi was distinguished by its philosophical depth, difficult allusions and artificial expressions. The geographical identification, said the Iranian critics, was a mere convenience, it did not necessarily demarcate between the poets of the three races. In more recent estimate the Sabki – i – Hindi has come to be denigrated as a sign of decadence and lack of taste. Its name, reminding the Indian connection, was bound to cast reflection, rightly or wrongly, on the vast literature produced in the sub continent and has not failed to create embarrassment. In his last days, Kalim was allowed by Shah Jahan to stay in Kashmir, where his object was to prepare the versified chronicle of his master's reign. Only about fifteen thousand verses, covering the early ten years, had been completed before the poet was overtaken by death, its proposed title was Padshah – namah.

Kalim's ancestral place was Hamdan where he was born, but spent his childhood and was educated at Kashan and earned name and fame in India. He first came to the Deccan and spent fourteen years (1605-19) at the Bijapur court and then went back to Iran but soon returned and in 1620 got himself attached to Mir Jumla.”⁵¹

Some specimens of his verses are cited below –

ز تیغش چاک شد دل چون نهان سازد غم اورا
 گریبان چاک شد گل را کجا سازد نهان بورا
 هر کس اگر بقدر هنر بهره یافتی
 بانیست آب بحر نصیب گهر شود

(The beloved sword tore his heart, how could he hide the secret of his love?

Once the bud opened up into full bloom, how could it conceal its fragrance?)

(It is not lot of everyone to attain perfection, if it was so, every drop of the ocean would turn into a pearl.)”⁵²

*(O Kalim, how do you expect that she (i.e. the sweet heart) will grant you a kiss gratis, when she does not even curse one free?)*⁵³

When ShahJahan was recrowned on the peacock-throne Kalim wrote a qasida of 63 couplets and received his body's weight in silver for it and yet today it is forgotten. Here is a selection of the first ii couplets from it.

New Year's day occurring now with Eid of Ramadan is

Lucky...

On the new year and month flowers of joy are showered,

Openly.

Two cups nare in hands of the winebringer at festival of joy...

Two crescent moons are needed to unity of two Eids enjoy,

Completely.

In the eyes of the capital's population the third Eid is the dust

Of the procession of Shah Jahan who is seen as a world of

Glory!

New Year's Day is receiving exalted cries upon such an Eid

When the emperor is sitting upon the throne of absolute

Monarchy.

I'm composing pearls of speech full of germs to praise his throne:

God granti that one Noah's long life and speech eternal to

Me!

Rubies from a thousand Sri Lankans, hundreds pof Badakhshans

Were obtained as gifts by the throne when unveiling its

Beauty.

The luster of its diamonds mingling with the light of its rubies

Is like the reflection of light in crystal water, O so pure to

See!

Much greener than freshest grass are all its antique emeralds:

Who could even understand how so many opposites could

Be?

The throne's gold might have melted due to the fire of its rubies

If it was not for the water of its pearls, so lustrous, so...

Pearly!

Even a lamp could be lighted by fire of its abundance of rubies:

A lamp that could not be extinguished by water or wind,

Easily.

The throne is princeless but whatever else you may want, it has:

Dignity and majesty and glory and grace and grandeur and

Beauty.”⁵⁴

SALIM TAHANI, MUHAMMAD QULI

He was patronized by Islam Khan, the noble of Shah Jahan reign, whose victories in Assam he celebrated in a masnawi entitled, Jang – i – Islam Khan. A verse of Salim describing the state of culture in Mughal India is very famous. He said, Iran does not process conditions for the achievement of perfection. Henna's bright colour

will not shine unless brought to India. His last days were passed in Kashmir where a galaxy of literary men shed lustre around the provincial governor, Zafar Khan. His rivals accused him of plagiarization, but he was brilliant enough to face them. Salim left a Diwan of verses.

MUHAMMAD ALI SAIB (Saib Tabrizi)

He was one of the greatest celebrated Persian poet of the later Safavid period. The exact year of his birth is unknown, but an allusion in one of his ghazals to turning eighty suggests that he was born sometime in the last decade of the sixteenth century. He was the son of Mirza Abdur Rahim was born in Tabriz in 988/1580.⁵⁵ He was a privileged child of the mercantile elite. His family was among those evacuated from Tabriz by Abbas I as a response to Ottoman incursions and settled in the neighborhood of Abbas-abad in Isfahan. It is here that Saib was educated and begun his literary career. As a young man, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca and the Shi'ite shrine in Najaf and Karbala.

He became a man of learning and a poet of very high order. When he started turning out verses, he chose Saib as his pen-name. He came to India towards the closing months of Emperoe Jahangir's reign in 1626 and lived for six years at Shah Jahan's court (1626 – 32) and then went back to Iran, his native land. He carried happy memories of his stay in India and remained in constant touch with Indian poets and exchanged with them poetic pieces.

His seven year residence in India helped to establish his reputation as the foremost poet of the age, and he spent the rest of his life in Isfahan, traveling only to visit other cities in Persia. He apparently enjoyed cordial, if not especially close relations, with the Safavid court. His Diwan contains panegyrics dedicated to Shah

Safi Abbas ii, and Shah Soleyman. Although Abbas ii appointed him to the post of poet laureate, Saib did not take up residence in the palace and a story circulating in Isfahan a few years after his death tells how he had himself excused from the royal retinue during an excursion to Mazandaran. On the other hand his reputed falling out with Shah Soleyman seems to be no more than a biographer's embellishment on the opening verse of his coronation ode. In any case, it is unlikely that Saib depended on royal patronage for his livelihood. He could find a ready public audience for his ghazals in Isfahan's coffee shops and a more elite clientele in the homes of well-to-do merchants and courtiers. The biographer Maliha of Samarqand describes Saib's home as one of the grandest in the entire city and the poet employed his own resident calligrapher, Arif Tabrizi to transcribe copies of his diwan. In his later years Saib appears to have retired from public life, receiving a limited number of students and literary admirers from throughout the Persian-speaking world. He was buried in a garden retreat near the Masjed-I-Lonban in Isfahan. His tomb, together with those of his son and grandson, was rediscovered in the 1930s. There are many opinions regarding the date of Saib's death. According to Saib's student Asraf Mazandaran Saib died in 1081/1670-71 but in the inscription on the tomb of Saib it is mentioned as 1087/1676.

Saib was a poet of wide outlook.”⁵⁶ During the course of a literary career Saib spanned over sixty-five years. He compiled one of the largest diwan in classical Persian literature. Although the estimates of the biographers of 120,000 to 200,000 verses are inflated, the most comprehensive edition of the diwan nevertheless contains some 75,000 lines of poetry. This figure is especially remarkable considering that Saib wrote no narrative poetry. His work the Qandhar or Abbas –nama contains

between 35,000 and 135,000 verses. Dedicated to all of Saib's major patrons in India and Persia, these poems provide crucial documentary evidence not only of the poet's life, but also of Safavid architecture and popular political ideology. However, by far the bulk of Saib's literary output consists of ghazals. In the history of Persian literature, only Jalaluddin Rumi's *Diwan-i-Sams* begins to approach the size and scope of Saib's lyric oeuvre. Saib's ability to create new images and metaphors places him among the outstanding poets in Persian literature and attributes the range of his imagery to the social spread of poetry outside the confines of the court into the realm of everyday urban life. Saib himself uses the phrase *manaya bigana*, unfamiliar or alien conception, to refer to the unexpected images, startling similes and unusual metaphors that flowed from his pen.

Poetic inspiration seemed to come to him unbidden through divine emanation, revealing often unpredictable connection between objects of the material world as manifestations of a cosmic unity of being.

His contemporary Mohammad Taher Nasrabadi remarks on Saib that "the sublimity of his genius and extent of his fame need no description. The Safavid rulers used to send copies of his *Diwan* as gifts to rulers in other parts of the Islamic world. In the late 18th century saw the development of the neo-classical *bazgast-e-adabi* (Literary return), which like most new literary movements, found its identity in part by rejecting the values of its immediate predecessors. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Reza Quli Khan Hedayat could write simply that Saib wrote in "a strange style that is not now approved". This blanket rejection remained critical dogma in Persian literary circles through the early decades of the twentieth century and is perhaps best represented by Mohammad Taqi Bahar's succinctly comprehensive

dismissal of Saib and his style. After the fall of the Qajar dynasty and the rise of modernism, Saib and seventeenth century poetry in general began to be re-evaluated. Saib's return to the canon of classical poetry was officially marked by a conference held at the University of Tehran in January 1976 and attended by many of the major literary figures of the day; its proceedings remain an essential contribution to the critical literature on the poet.

He preached that one's love for one's religion should not make one ridiculous or belittle other people's faiths and religions. His poetry is extraordinarily rich in allusions and allegories and deeply tinged with ethics and mysticism. In fact, in the light of his poetic pieces, one may safely conclude that he may not have worn the patched garments of the mystics but in the dealings with his fellow-beings he behaved like a Sufi. His philosophy of life, as reflected in his poetry, seems to have been; love all, hate none; help all, harm none; respect all, look down upon none.

Saib's literary style: Saib's ghazal normally tend to run longer than the classical norms; though some poems are as short as five verses, most contain ten to twelve lines and ghazals of fifteen to twenty verses are not unusual. Longer ghazal often repeated the same rhyme words two or three times and occasionally deploy a double *matle*, opening line at the start of the poem. He is known for his figures of thought. He frequently refers to his "fresh style" and boasts of its unfamiliar, colorful and outstanding conceit. This "poetic of the new" prizes the unexpected turn of thought or startling connection between image and idea. The following verses illustrate several other typical features of Saib's style:

Conan be-fekr-e to dar-kvistan foru raftim

*Ke kosh sod co sabu zir-e sar mara."*⁵⁷

Saib introduce the popular colloquialisms into the language of the ghazal, gained popularity among the people. Another frequently noted aspect of Saib's imagery is how he uses metaphor to animate lifeless objects or abstract concepts. We can see this figure of thought at work in the opening verses of one ghazal.⁵⁸

Ma'ni az lafz-e sabok-ruh falak-pardaz ast

Lafza-e pardaktabal o par-e in sahbaz ast esq bala-tar az an ast ked far wasf

Ayadcark kabkist ke vdar panja-ye in sahbaz ast

(Through ethereal words, meaning can soar to the skies;

Polished words are the wings and feathers of this falcon. Love is too lofty to bedescribed. The wheel of heaven is a partridge in the talons of this falcon.)

Some specimens of his beautiful and touching lyrical verses and quatrains are cited below –

در بهشت برین گر کشاده می خواهی
بکن به مردم محتاج در فراز اینجا^۱
گفتگوی کنرو دین آخر به یکجا می کشد
خواب یک خواب است و باشد مختلف تعبیرها^۲
مراز کوی خرابیات پای رفتن نیست
مگر بخانه برد محاسب بدوش مرا^۳

(If you desire that the doors of paradise be opened for you, keep your door opened wide for the poor and the needy here.)

(Saib, everyone I see is intoxicated and beyond his senses, although no one has seen the cup – bearer and the wine)

خواهی به کعبه رو کن و خواهی به هومنات
 از اختلاف راه چه غم رهنمای کیست
 در چشم پاک بین نه بود رسم امتیاز
 در آفتاب سایه شاه و گدا یکیست²

(Whether you turn your face towards thr Ka'ba or to the Somnatn temple, it makes no difference; you are in the presence of the same God in both the places.

In the eyes of men of God, there is no discrimination between the high and the low, as the bright sun makes the bagger and the monarch both cast the same kind of shadows.)”⁵⁹

Some other specimens of his beautiful ghazal as follows:-

From any music, Your melody, not existing...

Is not:

World's full of you, yet nowhere You're being,

Is not?

Though all in existence keep begging at your door..

A truth, not one knows where You're staying,

Is not?

Except for begging that Your land is non-existent,

A handful of black dirt to You, worth nothing,

Is not?

Sa'ib could be likened to a moth, what's to sacrifice?

Worship of You, many a holy soul, sacrificing,

Is not:

Each moment a new problem the world giving me

Is!

Each breath a new thron, scratching my, eye, I see,

Is!

A shop with some goods I've borrowed I have set up:

Each moment a creditor wanting loan back quickly

Is!

Like some villain from whom a limb is cut each hour,

The sphere, stony-hearted, a friend taking from me

Is!

Since my Beloved left me, I trembled in fear of my life:

Patient from nurse be not far, like this one you see

Is.

Sa'ib, don't rely that the soul's attached to the body,

For the sphere detaching many a graft...obviously

Is! ⁶⁰

QUDSI MASHHADI

“He belonged to Mashhad Iran and lived at the court of Shah Jahan. He left his name in the lucky list of writers and men of genius, whom the Mughal emperors rewarded with their body weight of silver. The occasion was Shah Jahan’s accessions to ‘Peacock throne’, marvel of jewels and gold. In old age, he was employed for composing a versified chronicle and obtained the emperor’s permission to live in Kashmir. The work appeared under the title Shah Jahan – namah and contained about ten thousand verses. His Diwan was popular among the contemporaries. In 1631 he came to the Mughal court and was warmly received. Shah Jahan several times rewarded him handsomely for his odes. He died in Agra in 1624.”⁶¹ The following lyrical verses are specimens of his poetic creation –

من آن نیم که کنم سرکشی ز تیغ جفا
 چو شمع زنده سرخویش دیده ام برپا
 دمی که بگردد بی کرشمه ساقی
 نفس کند به دلم کار ریزه مینا
 کسی که لذت پیکان بی نشانی یافت
 دگر نه شده به نشان آشنا چو تیر خطا
 ای مرا بی رخت افتاده دو عالم ز نظر
 مردم چشم مرا خاک رحمت نور بصر

(I am not the one who will run away from the sword of tyranny, but like a lighted candle am every ready to offer my head.)

(One who tasted the joy of being struck by an aimless shaft wished to be hit again and again in the same manner).⁶²

(Without your face, the two worlds carry no value with me. The dust touched by your feet is the collyrium for my eyes.).⁶³

When his son Mohammad Baqir died in the prime of his youth in Mashad, Qadsi was heartbroken and decided not to go back to his native land but remain in India. Later he settled permanently in Kashmir and eventually passed away in Agra. In Kashmir he composed about 10000 couplets of a masnavi on the life of Shahjahan. Among his fellow poets his Divan was popular. About 22,500 couplets of his poetry have survived. His qasidas in praise of Prophet Mohammad and the Imams are considered sincere expressions of his belief in religious unity.

The following 20 couplets by Qudsi by order of Shahjahan were inscribed inside the fabulous 'Peacock Throne', perhaps mankind's greatest throne made by man.

*Hail this auspicious throne made of the king,
By the grace of God was its completing.
Heaven has melted for its construction,
Firstly, all the gold contained in the sun.
By the order of the emperor the blue sky
Went into its enamelling... from on high!
What use gold and jewels, but on this?
The sea and mine were created, for this!
The priceless rubies upon it have paled
Ruby lips of all sweethearts and formed
Its base and the crown and the ring, too,
Have been a lifetime carrying jewels too.
To make this...the world was depleted
Of its gold; earth, all that was treasured!
If the sky could reach the throne's base,
It'd offer moon and sun, in its blue case.
Any nobleman against its base rubbing
head, a step above sky, throne is raising.
Tribute of sea and mine, its decoration;
Its shadow like shelter of God's throne.
It glitters with germs of many-colours..
Each a lantern to light the world of ours.
And the floral jewels of its panels shine
Like High light on Sinai, in Moses' time.*

*Out of despire of never reaching throne,
 Jamshid lent gem for decorating throne.
 With throne's lustrous pearls and rubies
 Night can stars to a hundred skies.
 Because it is kissing Shah Jahan's feet,
 Then throne worth Heaven does meet.
 World-bestowing king, whose future is
 Rising, on a throne, spending a world, is!
 A throne like this, is his rightful seat...
 All the world's tribute's lying at his feet!
 A chronogram tongue wished to say..
 Throne of the Just Emperor' I did say.”⁶⁴*

GIRAMI, HASAN BEG SHAMLU:

“He came from Iran in the reign of Jahangir and held high offices in Gujrat and Bengal in succession till the time of Shah Jahan. Girami was an acknowledged poet and left a Diwan of verses.

AHSAN, ZAFAR KHAN

He was a noble of the reign of Shah Jahan and served as governor of the provinces of Kabul and Kashmir. He could compose lyrics of musical elegance himself, but more profitable to literature was his generous patronage enjoyed by so many poets of the age. At his invitation Mirza Saib came from Isfahan to Kabul, and then, travelled to Delhi and other cities of India in his company. In Kashmir, he gathered a brilliant circle of literary men around him; Qudsi, Salim, Kalim and Shaida, all arrived there during his tenure of governorship, not to mention, Ghani and

other local talents, whom he encouraged for creative interaction. He left a Diwan of verses and a Masnawi: Jalwah – i – Naz.

NAZIM MIRZA FARRUKH HUSAIN

He belonged to Herat and came to India in the reign of Shah Jahan. Prince Shuja gave him employment. In the war of succession, the prince and his family were destroyed by the rival brother, and Nazim, having lost his job, settled in Jahangir Nagar, Dacca, where he earned a meagre living by the profession of teaching. He left a Dewan of verses, and a masnawi entitled: Yusuf – Zulaikha.

RAQIM, SAD UD-DIN:

He belongs to Mashhad, Iran and arrived in India during the reign of Shah Jahan. His patron was the emperor's noble and prime minister. Islam Khan (d. 1057/1647) Raqim impressed many poets by his style and left a Diwan of verses.

SAIYED QASIM B. MIR NUR ULLAH:

He was a religious scholar and poet living in Hyderabad, Deccan. He wrote a metrical commentary on the Qur'an and named it Matla'ush-shams, 1045/1635.”⁶⁵

Baqir Khan Najm Sani Baqir

He came to India during the reign of Jahangir, got married to the daughter of Nur Jahan's sister, Khadija Begum, and became an eminent mansabdar, under Shah Jahan and died in office as governor of Allahabad in 1637. He was much skilled in prose and poetry and composed verses under the pen-name of Baqir. He left a valuable Diwan behind.

AURANGZEB

“Aurangzeb was born on 24 October, 1618 at Dohab near Ujjain. He was born of Shah Jahan's favorite wife Mumtaz Mahal, the lady of the taj. He was the sixth of

the fourteen children of Shah Jahan. The early period of his life was quite turbulent; while he was still only eight years old he was sent by Shah Jahan along with Dara, as hostage to Jahangir. It was only after the death of Jahangir and accession of Shah Jahan that Aurangzeb was set free and arrangements for his proper education were made. He received his education under Mir Muhammad Hashim of Gilam, and soon familiarized himself with the Quran and the Hadis. Aurangzeb also received training in fighting and developed the qualities of bravery. It is said that at the age of 15 he showed wonderful bravery by attacking and wounding an infuriated elephant which greatly evoked the admiration of Shah Jahan as well as others present there.”⁶⁶

Aurangzeb was a great scholar and powerful writer. He was learned in Islamic theology and jurisprudence. He was especially interested in the work of Imam Ghazzali. He was equally well versed in the secular science. He knew Arabic, Persian, Turki and Hindi. He wrote many of his letters in Persian and those are models of a direct, simple and beautiful style, free from all verbosity. Bernier wrote about Aurangzeb that he “is endowed with a versatile and rare genius. That he is a consummate statesman and a great king.

Aurangzeb had received the best education as a prince and wrote elegant Persian prose. His taste in poetry was also of a high order as the verses quoted by him in his letters amply indicate. The following couplet ascribed to him, if correct, shows that when he chose, he could compose poetic pieces competently.

There are large numbers of famous Indian Persian poets during Aurangzeb period i.e. Abdul Fattah ‘Askari Afsari, Shaikh Kamal ud-Din, Ahsan ullah, Hafiz, Nasir Ali Sarhindi, Mullah Shah etc. and as Aurangzeb didn’t patronize poets in his

court less number of Persian poets migrated from Iran during his period. Life sketches migrated poets have been discussed below –

MIRZA NURUDDIN MUHAMMAD

Mirza Nuruddin Muhammad entitled Nimat Khan ‘Ali Shirazi came to India during the reign of Aurangzeb who granted him a mansab of 500. By his polished manners and brilliant wit, he soon became the Emperor’s trusted courtier and for a number of years was the taster of food in the imperial kitchen. He was present in the imperial camp and was an eye witness to the conquests of Bijapur (1686) and Golkunda (1687) by Aurangzeb and left satirical accounts of the two campaigns. He lived to serve under Bahadur Shah-i for two years enjoying a promotion in his rank and the title of Danishmand Khan. He died in Lahore in 1709.

Nimat Khan ‘Ali was a poet of high standing, his poetry being singularly free from artificial device and verbosity so common in those days. His ghazals were elegant and touching.

A few lines are cited here:

(When you visit the bar, you must have a cup or two of the wine, it will solve every problem of your heart.

Only a mad person will retire from her (the beloved’s) quarters, which is a repository of heart, wealth, aspiration and hope. It is futile to look for happiness in this world; this bliss belongs to and is available in haven alone.)”⁶⁷

ALAWI, MUHAMMAD TAHIR HUSAINI

He came from Kashan, Iran, in the reign of Aurangzeb, and settled in Kashmir. As a poet, he treated Jalal Asir as his literary guide and imitated his style. He left a Diwan and the masnawi poem, *Haddad-wa-Hallaj*.

HAIRAT, MIRZA ‘INAYAT ULLAH

He came from Bukhara and was raised to the rank of a noble at the court of Aurangzeb. Later on Shah ‘Alam Bahadur Shah further enhanced his position and conferred to him the title of Qaswar Khan. He was a scholar and poet with inclination towards Sufism. One of his friends, Farke-ud-Din Ahmed, collected his Diwan of verses in Hairat’s own lifetime.

MUNSIF KHWAJAH BABA, FAZIL KHAN

He belonged to a Saiyed family of Samarqand and arrived in India during the reign of Aurangzeb, who acknowledged his scholarship by conferring on him the title mentioned above. After Aurangzeb’s death, he survived many years and passed his old age in Lahore where ‘Abdus-Samad Khan, the governor of Punjab, treated him with kindness. Munsif’s Diwan of verses has survived.

Mullah Shah

“Mullah Shah Badakhshi, popularly known as “Mullah Shah” was a Sufi, spiritual successor of the famous Mian Mir who was born in Badakhshan then migrated to Kashmir. He belonged to the Qadiri order of Sufism. He was the spiritual mentor of the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh. Dara Shikoh desired to be initiated into the Qadri order at the hands of Hazrat Mian Mir. After Hazrat Mian Mir’s passing in 1635 Dara Shiko’s search for a Master took him to Kashmir where he met Mulla Shah. In his institution, pupil from far boarded to fulfill the thirst of knowledgge.

He lived in a simple manner and often went about naked like Sarmad did. He met Emperor Shah Jahan and Emperor Aurangzeb who both were not impressed by him. Shah Jahan in fact wanted to imprison him for his ecstatic utterances but Dara

Shikoh intervened on his behalf. Emperor Aurangzeb had also called him to his court but Mulla Shah was too sick to go and died some time later. He would often utter his ruba'is when in a state of spiritual ecstasy.

One of his popular rubai is as follows:-

My heart by a thousand tongues "I am God", cries to me,

Why do they bring for what's from my lips, cries of heresy?

Those attaining God shouted... "I am absolute Truth!"

*I'm only saying what Shaikh Mian Mir mentioned to me!*⁶⁸

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CONCLUSION

The Mughal period was established by Babur in 1526 A.D. and flourished during the reign of his worthy successors like Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. This period was comparatively peaceful and full of prosperity then the period of Delhi Sultanate. The rapid dynastic changes and the narrow outlooks of the rulers of Delhi Sultanate and the activities of the Khalifas and Ulemas created a wide gulf between the Muslims and the Non-Muslims. But during the Mughal period the process of synthesis not only started due to the liberal attitude of the emperors but also reached its climax in the regime of Akbar. The rulers of this period were great scholars poets and penmen and they liberally patronised the learned. Persian poetry as well as Persian historical prose tremendously progressed during the Mughal period. They were fond of poetry. The founder of Mughal dynasty in India Jahiruddin Muhammad Babur himself was a quatrain and ghazal writer. His son and successor Humayun was the possessor of a Diwan. Other rulers of this period like Jahangir and Shahjahan were also fond of poetry except Aurangzeb who never wanted to appoint court poets and patronize the poets. During the Mughal period Persian poets and scholars from various parts of Iran and Central Asia began to congregate to India. The foremost reason was that the Safavi rulers of Iran did not reward and patronise the poets. The Safavids ruled in Iran from 1501 to 1722. It was from this time that a kind of intense competitive sense had generated between the Persian poets and writers of India and Iran, each on eulogizing Persian diction, expression, writing and poetic form of his country which by the middle of eighteenth century, degenerated into veiled denigrating of the Persian writings of the other country. This is amply

demonstrated in the observations of poets like Nasir Ali Sirhindi of India and Hazain Lahiji of Iran. On the contrary the powerful Mughal emperors were always ready to welcome and patronised the poet who migrated to their courts. Another factor that played an important part in the emigration of Persian poets to India was the severe centralisation of the Persian Government and the Shiite oppression. We can thus speak of a large scale emigration of Persian writers to India, whereas the earlier contacts between Iran and India has been brought about by the Ghaznavid invasions via Afghanistan and Turkistan. Consequently Indo-Persian literature went through a process of refinement, with the remarkable poets from Persia the literary standard advanced.

The Mughal Period constituted a significant stage in the development of Persian literary sensibility. The poetry of this epoch is marked by an outspoken spirit of innovation and experimentation, yet not without due regard for the earlier literary heritage of Iran. Mughal poetry signified a fine blending of rhetorical excellence and grandeur of thought, in which thought occupied a superior position. The poets enthralled by its newness, experimented with new image and tropes.

The Mughal period witnessed the culmination of the development of all forms of Persian literature particularly Persian poetry. Emperor Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was not only a great commander and conqueror, but also a man of refined literary taste and master of a pure and unaffected style both in prose and poetry. He was a born poet and his court was thronged with the poets like *Tahir Bukhari*, *Sheikh Zain Khawafi*, *Sekh Abdul Wahid Farighi*, *Shaikh Shibuddin Muammai*, *Qara Bahadur Khan*, *Mulla Baqai*, *Surkh Widai*, *Atishi Qandhari*, *Khwajah Kalam Beg* etc.

Humayun also a great poet whose court was blessed with the poets like *Maulana Nadiri Samarkandi, Jahi Yatman Bukhari, Haidar Tuniai, Shah Tahir, Bairam Khan, Nuri, Nur – ud – Din, Farighi, Shaikh Abdul Wahid, Sabuhi Chaghata, Tarumi, Mulla ‘Ali Muhaddis, Ghubari, Qasim Ali Khan, Kahi, Qasim, Bekasi, Ghaznaw Amir Beg, Mulla Hairati* etc.

Akbar reign witnessed a brilliant age in the history of Indo-Iranian literature. Though technically illiterate, Akbar possessed a scholarly taste and his enthusiastic patronage attracted to his court the best talents to his court not only from every nook and corner of India but also from every part of Iran. This was especially show in the field of poetry. His court was blessed with some great personalities of Persian literature like *Ghazali Mashhadi, Qasim – i – Arsalan, Qasim – i – Kahi, Ashki Qummi, Baqi Kaulabi, Hayat Jan, Bahram Saqqa, Shah Birdi Bayat, Fida’i Rustam Mirza Safawi, Hairati Taqiud – Din, Gina’i Shams un – Din Muhammad, Mazahari Kashmiri, Maili Harawi, Muhammad Quli, Nawedi, Raha’i Shaikh Sa’d ud – Din Khwafi, Ulfati Yazdi, Urfi, Jamal – ud – Din Muhammad, Talib Isfahani, Rafi, Mir Haidar Muamma’I, Shuja’i Saiful – Muluk, Khwaja Hussain Sana’I, Muhammad Riza Shikebi Isfahani, Muhammad Hussain Naziri, Hayati Gilani* etc.

Jahangir inherited the rich cultural traditions from his imperial and illustrious father and allowed them to make further progress under his warm patronage. He was an accomplished poet in his own right and has left several verses which bear witness to his poetic merit. He could recite verses extempore on suitable occasions as the following instances will show. There are many notable poets in his court like Talib Amuli, Nur Jahan, Mir Abdullah Mizah, Mir Maumin Adai, Grdhar Das, Dusti

Samarqandi, Girami Hasan Beg Shamlu, Ahwali, Anisi Shamlu Beg, Sirajud Din Husain Arif Eigi, Hasan Beg Khaki, Mulla Haidar Khisali etc.

Shahjahan was a worthy successor of his father and under his active patronage the Mughal culture made striding progress in all respects. Though he personally was not a poet although on occasions he could eminently extemporize, poetry attained a new height during his reign. Soon after he assumed imperial power he elevated Abu Talib Kalim Kashani, who had only recently joined service under him, to the prestigious office of the poet-laureate. The other notable poets of his court were *Kalim Hamdari, Muhammad Quli Salim Tahani, Muhammad Ali Saib Tabrizi, Qudsi Mashhadi, Hasan Beg Shamlu Girami, Zafar Khan Ahsan, Nazim Mirza Farukh Hussain, Sadud Din Raqim, Saiyed Qasim B. Mir Nurullah, Baqir Khan Najm Sani Baqir* etc.

Aurangzeb had received the best education as a prince and wrote elegant Persian prose. His taste in poetry was also of high order as the verses quoted by him in his letters amply indicate. He did not appoint court poet, but there were also many poets who contributed a lot during his reign. They were Mirza Nuruddin Muhammad, Muhammad Tahir Husaini Alawi, Mirza Inayat Ullah, Hairat, Fazil Khan Munsirf Khwajah Baba etc.

Babur composed poetry in both Turki and Persian language. He composed Persian verses under the pen-name, Babur. His quatrains have a touch of mysticism. Babur wrote beautiful and romantic ghazals of very high standard in simple Persian.

Humayun was also a great poet whose court was blessed with many notable poets. He had a cultivated mind and like his father was not only an admirer of poetry

but himself wrote pleasant verses. His sense of appreciation of others poetry was also high. Humayun left a Diwan.

Maulana Nadiri Samarqandi was another poet of repute attached to Humayun's court. He was regarded as one of the wonders of the age on account of his profound learning.

Bairam Khan (d. 968/1561) was Humayun's chief counsellor during the letter's day of failure and hard luck, and he became the regent in the early days of Akbar enjoying the high title of Khan – i – Khanan. When Humayun's sudden and premature death brought Akbar aged thirteen, to the throne, he acted as regent and wazir. Bairam's own field being ghazal, he had discovered the secret of simple expression. Each verse in his concise Diwan is a specimen of excellence. He turned out beautiful pieces of verses both in Persian and Turki with equal case and left a slim but rich Diwan of his compositions. His Persian lyrics were laced with carefully chosen words, phrase and idioms and bore the stamp of eloquence and simplicity.

Sabuhi Chaghata'i (d. 973/154) belonged to Herat, modern Afghanistan and lived as a poet at the court of Humayun. With the triumphant re-entry of his patron, Sabuhi came to India and witnessed the early decade of Akbar's reign. He enjoyed the literary company of Qasim – i – Kahi, who obliged Sabuhi by composing a chronogram on his death which occurred at Agra: Sabuhi the drunkard, Sabuhi – i – Maikhwar 973/1565.

Tarumi, Mulla 'Ali Muhaddis: (d. 982/1574) belonged to Tarun, near Samarqand and was patronized by Humayun for his scholarship. His contemporaries acknowledged him as a traditionist although he was successful enough in composing poetry. He visited India a second time in the reign of Akbar and Mulla 'Alim Kabuli,

the court poet composed chronogram of his death, which occurred in Agra. He was the author of a commentary on Imam Abu Hanifa's *Figh – i – Ahbar*.

Qasim Ali Khan Ghubari, Qasim Kahi and Nuruddin Nuri were the other prominent poets of Humayun period.

Akbar's reign witnessed a brilliant age in the history of Indo-Iranian literature. Though technically illiterate, Akbar possessed a scholarly taste and his enthusiastic patronage attracted to his court the best talents to his court not only from every nook and corner of India but also from Iran. This was especially show in the field of poetry. His court was blessed with some great personalities of Persian literature.

Muhammad Urfi Shirazi (*b.963H/1555-6, d.999H/1590-1*) came to India at the beginning of his poetic career and introduced him to Emperor Akbar by Abdur Rahim Khan-Khanam. His *Diwan* consists of several *qasida's*, quatrains, ghazals, *tarzibands* etc. Urfi composed '*Masnawi's*' in imitation of Nizami's *khamisa* namely "*Majma-ul-Bakar*", *Farhad wa Shirin*" etc. but couldn't complete due to his sudden death. He left a few *masnawis*, letters, an ethical tract and *Diwan* of verses.

Ghazali Mashhadi was poet-laureate at the court of Akbar and left his name among the masters whose genius elevated the dignity and importance of Persian ghazal. He had a voluminous *Diwan* of nearly 50000 verses. According to Abul Fazl- "He was unrivalled in depth of understanding and sweetness of language and was well acquainted with the noble thoughts of Sufis. He also composed a *masnawi* named '*Naqsh-i-badi*'.

Muhammad Hussain Naziri Nishapuri, follower of Indian style, is regarded as one of the greatest ghazal writer of Akbar's court. At the very young age he came to India and had got patronage of Khan-i-Khanan and entered in Akhabr's court. He

gained great reputation for his ghazal. He had a *Diwan* which was full of several *Qasidas, ghazal and rubayats* with 6,000 verses.

Saiyid Najimuddin Muhammad Abul Qasim Kahi, popularly known as Maulana Qasim Kahi was an interpreter of the Quran, a fine logician, a man of mysticism, generous in habit a musician, and a renowned conversations with sardonic wit, he was a distinguished poet and composed verses under the pen name Kahi. His poetry is fresh both in diction and content. He Diwan contained 1700 verses.

Along with the great poets the small ones are no less important. Their poetry is also elegant and excellent in its own way. Among them who have 'Diwan' are *Qasim-i-Arsalan, Khwaja Husain-i-Mervi, Ashki Qummi, Rustam Mirza safawi Fidai, Shah Birdi Bayat Bahram Saqqa, Mir Saiyed Ali Judai Tabrizi, Taqiud-Din Hairati Afzal Khan Kalami, Muhammad Quli Maili Harawi, Mahmud Lahori, Mulla Md. Sufi Mazandrani Nawedi, Shaikh sa'd ud Din Khwafi Rahai*, etc.

Jahangir inherited the rich cultural traditions from his imperial and illustrious father and allowed them to make further progress under his warm patronage. He was an accomplished poet in his own right and has left several verses which bear witness to his poetic merit. There are many notable poets in his court like Talib Amuli (1587-1626). Talib embarked on his literary career in his late teens, composing praise poems to notables in his native Mazandaran and ghazals under the penname Asud. During a brief stay in Isfahan, Talib wrote two qasidas in honour of Shah Abbas I, when these failed to win him entry into the Safavid court, he moved to Marv, where he found a patron in the provincial governor around 1606. His poetic style was simple but captivating. He was very fond of using similes and metaphors in his poetry which easily distinguished him from his contemporaries. It was Itimad – ud – Daulah who

introduced him to Emperor Jahangir, who impressed by his unique poetic excellence, appointed him the poet-laureate in January, 1619. He left Diwan of verses and a few masnawi poems. He died in 1626 and was buried outside Lahore.

Shahjahan was a worthy successor of his father though he personally was not a poet although on occasions he could eminently extemporize, poetry attained a new height during his reign. Soon after he assumed imperial power he elevated Abu Talib Kalim Kashani, who had only recently joined service under him, to the prestigious office of the poet-laureate. The other notable poets of his court were like –

Kalim Hamdari was poet laureate at the court of Shah Jahan. Earlier, he had visited India during the time of Jahangir, and also, stayed for some time in the capital of Bijapur under the patronage of Ibrahim, Adil Shah and his prime minister. Only about fifteen thousand verses, covering the early ten years, had been completed before the poet was overtaken by death, its proposed title was Padshah – namah.

Salim Tahani, Md. Quli (d. 1057/1647) was patronized by Islam Khan, the noble of Shah Jahan reign, whose victories in Assam he celebrated in a masnawi entitled, Jang – i – Islam Khan. A verse of Salim describing the state of culture in Mughal India is very famous. His rivals accused him of polarization, but he was brilliant enough to face them. Salim left a Diwan of verses.

Saib Tabrizi (1580 – 1671) was one of the greatest celebrated Persian poets of the later Safavid period. He came to India towards the closing months of Emperor Jahangir's reign in 1626 and lived for six years at Shah Jahan's court (1626 – 32) and then went back to Iran, his native land. Though returned to Iran and was made poet laureate of the Safawi ruler Shah Abbas II, he has recorded his experiences in India in many verses. He frequently refers to his "fresh style" and boasts of its unfamiliar,

colorful and outstanding conceit. This “poetic of the new” prizes the unexpected turn of thought or startling connection between image and idea.

Qadsi Mashhadi (d. 1056/1624) belonged to Mashhad Iran and lived at the court of Shah Jahan. His Diwan was popular among the contemporaries. In 1631 he came to the Mughal court and was warmly received. Shah Jahan several times rewarded him handsomely for his odes. He died in Agra in 1624.

Aurangzeb had received the best education as a prince and wrote elegant Persian prose. His taste in poetry was also of high order as the verses quoted by him in his letters amply indicate. He did not appoint court poet and neither patronized the poets but there were also many poets who contributed a lot during his reign. They were Nasir Ali, Bedil, and Wazih claim them to be the gods of poetry.

Before conclude, it may be said that this is not ending of our discussion on the poets migrated to India and their contributions to the development of Persian literature during the great Mughal Period of India. In fact, throughout the discussion it has been kept in mind that the migrated poets of Mughal Period would always invite the readers and the critics to treat them in an exhaustive manner that would certainly accelerate tempo to the need of the research going on.

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